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CONTENTS

22 February 1989

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

22 February Middle East and South Asia Review 1

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

Moroccan King Holds News Conference on Summit *[Rabat TV]* 3

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat, Shevardnadze To Meet After Arens Leaves *[Tunis Radio]* 8
  PLO Statement on Meeting *[Sanaa VOP]* 8
Hurani on PLO-Soviet Contacts, Syrian Ties *[Kuwait AL-WATAN 16 Feb]* 8
Yasir 'Arafat Interview With CBS Published *[Kuwait AL-QABAS 19 Feb]* 9
Khalaf Dialogue With Egyptian Committee Detailed *[Cairo AL-AHRAM 14 Feb]* 10
PLO's Faruq Qaddumi Views Peace Prospects *[WAKH]* 11
PNC Speaker Welcomes Launching of ACC *[Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B 18 Feb]* 12

ARAB AFRICA

Egypt

Foreign Minister Shevardnadze Continues Visit 13
  Meets Sidqi, 'Abd al-Majid *[Cairo Radio]* 13
  Comments on Talks *[MENA]* 13
  Presents 'Definite' Proposals *[MENA]* 13
Soviet Ambassador Discusses Shevardnadze Visit *[MENA]* 14
  Meets With Mubarak *[MENA]* 14
  Makes Statement *[MENA]* 14
Shevardnadze, Israel's Arens Meet in Cairo 22 Feb *[MENA]* 14
'Abd al-Majid, Arens Hold Discussions 21 Feb *[Cairo Radio]* 14
  'Abd al-Majid on Talks With Arens *[Cairo Radio]* 14
Agreement Reached With Israel on Sonesta Hotel *[MENA]* 15
  Minister on Agreement, Payment *[MENA]* 15
AFP: 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid To Visit Israel 15
Israel Requests Activation of Trade Ties *[AL-WAFD 15 Feb]* 15
Yasir 'Arafat Arrives in Cairo 22 Feb *[MENA]* 16
Mubarak Comments on Arab Issues, U.S., USSR *[MENA]* 16

Sudan

Prime Minister on South, Talks in Ethiopia *[MENA]* 21
Defense Minister Resigns; Replacement Named *[Omdurman Radio]* 21
  Minister Gives 'Four Reasons' *[KUNA]* 21
Officers Demand 'National Salvation Government' *[MENA]* 22
SPLA 'Bright Star' Forces Shell Juba 20 Feb *[Radio SPLA]* 22
  Attack on Juba Continues *[Radio SPLA]* 22

ARABIAN PENINISULA

United Arab Emirates

Egypt's Mubarak Arrives for 2-Day Visit *[WAKH]* 24
  Egypt's Al-Baz on Visit *[WAKH]* 24
  Mubarak Confers With President *[Cairo Radio]* 24
  Butrus Ghali Views Talks *[Cairo Radio]* 24
Reportage on Visit of Soviet Economic Delegation 24
  Cooperation Accord Discussed *[WAKH]* 24
  Economy Minister on Talks *[WAKH]* 24
  Businessmen Meet With Delegation *[WAKH]* 25
  Delegation Leaves *[WAKH]* 25
Officials Depart for Emperor Hirohito's Funeral *[WAKH]* 25

IRAQ

'Aziz Explains Nature, Aims of Arab Council *[Baghdad Radio]* 26
  More on 'Aziz News Conference *[INA]* 26
80 Sick, Handicapped POW's Return From Tehran *[INA]* 27
Military Commission Meeting With Iran Postponed *[INA]* 27
UN Observers Group Commander Leaves for Tehran *[INA]* 27
Vice President Leaves for Hirohito Funeral *[INA]* 27

ISRAEL

Shevardnadze, Arens Plan To Continue Contacts *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
  Comment After Meeting *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 28
Mubarak: Time 'Inappropriate' for Meeting Shamir *[THE JERUSALEM POST 22 Feb]* 29
Egyptian Envoy on New Soviet Mideast Moves *[Jerusalem International]* 29
Sale of Hotel Paves Way for Tabah Solution *[Jerusalem TV]* 29
Shamir Departs for France, Views Cairo Talks *[Jerusalem Radio]* 29
  LE FIGARO MAGAZINE Interview *[Paris 18 Feb]* 30
Arens Briefs Cabinet on Meeting With Thatcher *[HATZOFE 20 Feb]* 32
Herzog Departs for Tokyo for Hirohito's Funeral *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 32
Rabin Reiterates Objection to Talks With PLO *['AL HAMISHMAR 8 Feb]* 32
Knesset Passes Bill Limiting Local Elections *[Jerusalem Radio]* 32
Rabin: 'Uprising' Leaders Reproach PLO Leaders *[THE JERUSALEM POST 20 Feb]* 33
Shamir's Office Links Murder to Al-Husayni Talks *[THE JERUSALEM POST 19 Feb]* 33
Al-Husayni Decries Killing of Soldier, Others *[Jerusalem Radio]* 33
Likud Attacks Meetings With Palestinians *[Jerusalem Radio]* 33
SLA 'Sources': Amal, PLO Increase Attacks *[THE JERUSALEM POST 22 Feb]* 34
Settler's Death Caused by Gas Leak, Not Firebomb *[Tel Aviv TV]* 34
Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories 34
  24 Wounded on 20 Feb *[THE JERUSALEM POST 21 Feb]* 34
  5 Wounded; Unrest Expected *[Jerusalem Radio]* 34
  Arab Killed, Soldier Wounded *[Jerusalem Radio]* 35
  More on 21 Feb Incidents *['AL HAMISHMAR 22 Feb]* 35
  4 Houses Sealed in Gaza *[Jerusalem Radio]* 35

JORDAN

King Husayn Leaves for Hirohito Funeral 20 Feb *[Amman TV]* 36
King Husayn Interviewed on Relations With PLO *[Tokyo TV]* 36
Royal Decree Releases Administrative Detainees *[Amman TV]* 36
Al-Rifa'i Briefs Cabinet on ACC Meetings *[Amman Radio]* 36
Al-Rifa'i Pays 'Short Working Visit' to Syria *[Amman Radio]* 36
U.S. Congressman Confers With Al-Rifa'i *[Amman Radio]* 37
  Meets With Chief of Staff *[Amman Radio]* 37
Joint Committee With USSR To Meet in April *[JORDAN TIMES 22 Feb]* 37

LEBANON

- Shams al-Din Rules Out Hostage Issue Solution *[Voice of the People]* 38
- Tehran Cites Shams al-Din on Salman Rushdie 38
  - Fadlallah Supports Edict *[Tehran Radio]* 38
- 'Awn, Ja'ja' 20 Feb Meeting Termed 'Positive' *[VOL]* 38
  - Meeting 'Shrouded in Ambiguity' *[Beirut Radio]* 38
  - Ja'ja' on 'Positive' Meeting *[RFL]* 38
- Ja'ja' on 'Awn Talks; Denies Assassination Attempt *[RFL]* 39
- Beirut Radio on Army-Lebanese Forces Clashes 40
- 'Intensive' Gunfire Heard in East Beirut Area *[VOM]* 40
- Lebanese Forces Attack Army Roadblock *[Voice of National Resistance]* 40
  - Issue Statement on Fighting *[RFL]* 40
  - Fortify Positions in E. Beirut *[Voice of the People]* 41
- ICRC Resumes Work in South 17 Feb *[VOM]* 41
- Spiritual Leaders Depart for Kuwait *[RFL]* 41
- Syrians Consolidate Deployment in Suburb *[Beirut Radio]* 41
- Group Attacks Syrian Post in W. Beirut *[RFL]* 42
- 'Violent' Clashes Taking Place East of Sidon *[VOL]* 42
- Resistance Groups Carry Out Operations in South *[Beirut Radio]* 42
- Resistance Attacks Israeli-Lahd Position *[Beirut Radio]* 42
- Israeli Settlement Reportedly Shelled 21 Feb *[VOL]* 42
- Israeli Aircraft Overfly South, Mountain *[RFL]* 42

SYRIA

- Jordanian Prime Minister Arrives in Damascus *[Damascus Radio]* 43
  - Meets Al-Asad *[Damascus Radio]* 43
  - Departs 19 Feb *[SANA]* 43
- Damascus TV on Call From King Husayn to Al-Asad 43
- Relations With USSR 'of Strategic Value' *[Damascus Radio]* 43
  - Shevardnadze Visit 'Important' *[Damascus Radio]* 43
  - Press on Shevardnadze Visit *[Damascus Radio]* 43
- Fighting Between Lebanese Factions Scored *[Damascus Radio]* 44

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

- Najibullah Addresses Kabul Province Residents *[Kabul Radio]* 45
- Najibullah Creates New Unit, Increases Draft *[AFP]* 50
- Najibullah Issues Decree on Executive Committee *[Kabul Radio]* 51
- Najibullah Sends Messages to Government Leaders 51
  - Message to Iranian President *[Kabul Radio]* 51
  - Message to Turkish President *[Kabul Radio]* 52
  - Message to Libya's Al-Qadhdhafi *[Kabul Radio]* 52
- Najibullah Notifies UN of State of Emergency *[BAKHTAR]* 52
- Najibullah Appeals for Help in Settling 'Tangle' *[Delhi Radio]* 52
- AFP Details Najibullah Friday Prayers Visit *[AFP]* 52
- Wakil Assails Bush Position on Aid to Mujahidin *[BAKHTAR]* 53
- Wakil Sends Message to UN Official on Aid *[Kabul Radio]* 53
- Wakil Sends Open Letter to Nonaligned Ministers *[Kabul Radio]* 54
- Foreign Ministry Assesses Howe's 'Interference' *[Kabul Radio]* 54
- PDPA Central Committee Statement to Members *[Kabul Radio]* 54
- Ministers Pass Measures Regulating Food Supplies *[Kabul Radio]* 55
- Haqqani's Group Meets To Select Government *[AFP]* 56
- Interim Rebel Government Ministers Named *[IRNA]* 56
- Mujahidin Prepare for Government Collapse *[Islamabad Radio]* 57
- Abu Dhabi Paper Interviews Nabi Muhammadi *[AL-ITTIHAD 20 Feb]* 57
- TANJUG Reports on Situation in Kabul *[Belgrade]* 58
- Kabul Radio Details 19 Feb Military Situation 59

Mujahidin Liberate Capital of Oruzgan Province *[Islamabad Radio]* 59
'Extremists' Fire 5 Rockets at Kabul City *[Kabul Radio]* 59
40-50 Families Emigrate to Pakistan Daily *[Islamabad International]* 59

India

Gandhi for Broad-Based Government in Afghanistan *[Delhi Radio]* 59
President Inaugurates Parliament Session 21 Feb *[Delhi Radio]* 60
    Further on Address *[Delhi Radio]* 60
Delhi Reports Appointment of 5 State Governors 61
Reportage on Continuing Violence in Assam 61
    Four 'Miscreants' Killed *[Delhi Radio]* 61
    'Violent Activities' Continue *[Delhi Radio]* 61
    'Fresh Incidents' Reported *[Delhi Radio]* 61
21 'Terrorists' Arrested in Punjab; Weapons Found *[Delhi TV]* 62
Indefinite Curfew Imposed in Jamshedpur 21 Feb *[Delhi Radio]* 62
1,000 Arrested During Kashmir Demonstrations *[AFP]* 62
Bombay Authorities Seize Narcotics, Gold *[Delhi Radio]* 62

Iran

IRNA Cites Khomeyni Message to Nation *[IRNA]* 62
Bush Supports EC Envoy Withdrawal From Tehran *[IRNA]* 63
Diplomats' Recall Not Equal To Break in Ties *[Tehran TV]* 63
Hashemi-Rafsanjani Comments on EEC Move *[Tehran Radio]* 64
Tehran Radio Notes UK Muslim Lawyers' Action 64
EC Move Confronting 'Whole Islamic World' *[IRNA]* 64
Opposition Ayatollah Condemns Khomeyni Edict *[Rome ANSA]* 65
Pakistani Group En Route To 'Execute' Rushdie *[IRNA]* 66
Pakistani Muslims Approve Verdict on Rushdie *[Tehran Radio]* 66
USSR Presidium Sends Message to Khamene'i *[IRNA]* 66
Khamene'i Receives Najibullah Message on Peace *[IRNA]* 66
Further Reportage on Khamene'i Visit to SFRY *[cross-reference]* 67
Foreigners Commemorate Anti-Rushdie 'Martyrs' *[IRNA]* 67
Musavi Arrives in Tabriz From Ankara *[IRNA]* 67
    Comments on Loans, Rushdie *[IRNA]* 67
    Reveals Amnesty Plan *[IRNA]* 68
Larijani Interviewed on Relations With West *[IRNA]* 68
Besharati on Foreign Policy, Other Issues *[RESALAT 12 Feb]* 69
ETTELA'AT Comments on Foreign Loans *[6 Feb]* 69
Mohtashemi Comments on Afghan Refugees, Drugs *[Tehran Radio]* 70
Majlis Deputies Write Letter on Drug Campaign *[Tehran TV]* 70
Drug Raids Break Up 3 Rings; 90 People Arrested *[Tehran Radio]* 70
7 Drug Gangs 'Destroyed'; 250 Arrested *[Tehran Radio]* 71
Border Issues Discussed With Pakistani Governors *[IRNA]* 71
Mohtashemi, Sadr Reaffirm People's 'Rule' *[KEYHAN 21 Jan]* 71
'Counterrevolutionary' Prisoners Given Amnesty *[IRNA]* 72
83 Iraqi POW's Released 21 Feb *[IRNA]* 72
    Second Group Departs *[IRNA]* 73
Mehran Governorate Resumes Work After War *[IRNA]* 73
Opposition Group Members Hold News Conference *[Tehran TV]* 73

Sri Lanka

New Cabinet of 22 Ministers Sworn in 18 Feb *[LANKAPUVATH]* 74
Observer Group Says Elections 'Free and Fair' *[AFP]* 74
Delhi: 20 JVP Members Killed by New Group 74
Police on Alert; Militants Call Strike *[AFP]* 75
Jayewardene Leaves for Japan as Special Envoy *[Colombo International]* 75

22 February Middle East and South Asia Review

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Shevardnadze Tour

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze held talks with his Israeli counterpart Moshe Arens at the Soviet Embassy in Cairo 22 February, MENA reported. Shevardnadze had earlier told Israel's HADASHOT that the restoration of diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR is conditional on Israel taking "a number of steps," including beginning a dialogue with the PLO. Shevardnadze added that he would propose some "new" concepts in the meeting with Arens.

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat will also confer with Shevardnadze 22 February and the PLO views the meeting as "very important," according to a PLO spokesman cited by Sanaa Voice of Palestine radio. Tunis radio disclosed that the meeting has been scheduled to take place after Arens' departure from Cairo, noting that 'Arafat has said he will not go to Egypt while Arens is there.

On the Soviet minister's talks with Egyptian officials, Egyptian Foreign Ministry sources revealed that Shevardnadze presented "definite" proposals aimed at giving impetus to the peace process, according to MENA. The two sides agreed on the importance of action to shift the Israeli stand. As for bilateral relations, Shevardnadze expressed hope that President Husni Mubarak's expected visit to Moscow will be a "crowning achievement," the sources noted. Shevardnadze's talks with Egyptian Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi focused on the development of bilateral relations and cooperation, according to MENA and TASS reports.

Egyptian-Israeli Relations

Talks in Cairo between Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid and Israel's Moshe Arens dealt with "many and important issues," including ways to give impetus to the peace process, Cairo radio reported. According to THE JERUSALEM POST, 'Abd al-Majid accepted Arens' invitation to visit Israel, but Arens was "less successful" in persuading President Mubarak to meet Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir. Mubarak reportedly indicated that the time is "inappropriate" for such a meeting.

Meanwhile, the Egyptian tourism minister announced that Egypt and Israel have reached agreement over the amount that Egypt will pay to Israel as compensation for the hotel and tourist facilities in Tabah, MENA reported. Egypt will pay $37 million for the hotel, plus an additional $3 million over the next 5 years and it will also pay $1.15 million for the village.

The compensation agreement has paved the way for the handover of Tabah to Egypt by the middle of March, Jerusalem television noted.

Israel

An IDF soldier shot dead an Arab villager who wounded him in a knife attack, Jerusalem radio reported. At least five other Arabs were wounded in clashes with soldiers on 21 February, the last day of a 3-day general strike declared by the leadership of the "intifadah" (uprising). Palestinian sources cited by THE JERUSALEM POST claimed that 24 people were wounded by IDF gunfire the previous day. In another development, police announced that the death of an Israeli settler on 8 February was the result of a fault in his vehicle and not a terrorist attack, Tel Aviv educational television noted.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir arrived in France at the start of a 4-day visit, Paris radio reported.

Egypt-UAE Talks

Egypt's President Mubarak visited Abu Dhabi where he was received by UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, Abu Dhabi radio reported. The two leaders reviewed the "close brotherly relations" between their two countries and discussed issues of common interest including the Palestine problem and Lebanon.

Afghanistan

Food Supplies/Political Affairs—In a speech to the residents of Kabul Province broadcast by Kabul radio, President Najibullah appealed to the armed opposition not to attack the convoys bringing food and essential goods into the city. He asked them to visit the hospitals to see for themselves how many children are "close to death from malnutrition" and declared that it is the "religious duty" of everyone to bring food to the hungry. He again offered the opposition a share in the future goverment and asked the people to consider whether they should support his government or one set up by "Pakistani soldiers in the uniforms of the opposition."

Meanwhile, Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand has been appointed chairman of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, according to a decree broadcast by Kabul radio. The radio added that a regular meeting of the Council of Ministers 21 February adopted measures to improve the distribution of food and basic commodities in Kabul and to prevent hoarding and "economic sabotage."

The PDPA Central Committee ordered the "militarization" of all party committees and organizations and instructed all party members to participate in the "independent armed defense" of their localities, Kabul radio reported.

Military Situation—Najibullah has set up a "new fighting unit" under the command of the secret service, AFP reported. The unit will comprise members of the party's youth wing, the trade unions, and other bodies, the agency added. Reporting an intensification of fighting along the Salang highway, the agency noted that the government has begun an "indiscriminate bombing campaign" against villages near the highway.

The mujahidin fired five rockets on residential areas of Kabul 20 February which killed one person and injured five others, Kabul radio reported. The army recently arrested 23 "extremists" and captured quantities of arms and ammunition in Kabul itself, the radio added. According to Islamabad radio, the mujahidin destroyed 15 government military positions along the Kabul-Jalalabad highway.

Iran

Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi declared that the EEC's decision to recall its ambassadors from Tehran "will not go unanswered, and a precise act of retaliation will be carried out," Tehran radio reported. He added that the West "will soon realize that they have made a great mistake."

Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Larijani asserted that Iran will "stand by its position" that Salman Rushdie must be punished according to Islamic law, "no matter what the consequences may be," IRNA reported. The West should have no doubt that Iran is "determined to defend the reputation of Islam," and that Islamic beliefs "are most sacred to us - beyond anything else," he added.

Addressing the 21 February session of the Majlis, Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani emphasized that Iran does not fear Western "threats" and it is prepared to follow its own path "at any cost," Tehran radio noted.

According to an IRNA report citing Pakistan's THE NATION newspaper, a three-man group from Hyderabad, Pakistan, will reach London 28 February "to execute Rushdie."

Meanwhile, Sweden has recalled its ambassador from Tehran for consultations, and has agreed to "protect" British interests in Iran, according to Stockholm radio.

Iran-Iraq

Negotiations, POW Release—The scheduled 22 February meeting of the joint military commission to supervise the cease-fire was postponed and a new date for the meeting will be set, according to INA citing a press release issued in Baghdad.

A second group of disabled Iraqi POW's was released and flown home, IRNA reported. Another group is to be released 23 February, the agency added.

Soviet Attitude—A Soviet Foreign Ministry information official cited by TASS deplored the "uncritical" use of Western "propaganda" reports in a recent Moscow television report on executions in Iran and Iraq. The program described the executions as reflecting the "internal struggles" under way in the two countries.

Lebanon

The "worst result" of the recent "painful incidents" is that all political forces in the "free areas" turned into "fragmented and conflicting forces" involved in a purposeless battle, the Lebanese Forces asserted in a statement broadcast by the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon. The statement welcomed attempts to halt the fighting by Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Sfayr and by "fraternal" Iraq.

Meanwhile, Sfayr and other Lebanese clergymen met with the Arab good offices committee in Kuwait to discuss ways to end the conflict in Lebanon, KUNA reported.

Sudan

Defense Minister Replaced—Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has accepted the resignation of Defense Minister General 'Abd al-Majid Hamid Khalil and appointed Salah 'Abd al-Salam al-Khalifah as his replacement, Omdurman radio reported.

Southern Military Situation—The SPLA bombarded Juba city using heavy artillery on 20 February, the clandestine SPLA radio reported. The radio added that "massive damage" was caused to the city and that the bombardment is continuing.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Moroccan King Holds News Conference on Summit

LD1802000189 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 1640 GMT 17 Feb 89

[News conference by Moroccan King Hassan II at Marrakech city hall—live]

[Text] [Hassan] The custom has been for the head of the host country to meet the press at the end of a conference. We are present in this hall respecting this tradition. I ask you to avoid repetition in your questions and stay within the context of the Arab Maghreb. Please go ahead.

[Sufya] Ramzi Sufya, director of the Kuwaiti AL-SIYASAH. Your Majesty, in all the meetings of reporters with the inhabitants of the Saharan province, those inhabitants said that they held their referendum 13 years ago at which time they embraced their brothers from all over the Kingdom. Your Majesty proved your farsightedness when you declared Morocco's readiness to welcome all its sons who erred by joining the ranks of the Polisario. Now, Your Majesty, in light of the declaration of the Maghreb union, have you reached a certain formula in relation to the Saharan issue with the leaders of the union? Thank you.

[Hassan] I believe that the Arab Maghreb question is not one that arose just today. It has been the cause of previous generations, the dream lived by our fathers, and part of our education. Thus, one should examine—an analyst should examine—the question of the Arab Maghreb as a whole. We pray to Almighty God to confer on it persistence and everlastingness. Thus, the issue of the Arab Maghreb must not be linked to common events which can occur today just as they could occur tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. There are things which are continuous and things which are not continuous.

Therefore, the question you raised has no bearing on this issue, the issue of the Arab Maghreb, because our hopes and dreams of unifying the greater Arab Maghreb came several generations before this incidental event that has incongruously come into being, this event which I will call an historic fly, a fly that has come incongruously to tackle the lion of history, the lion of the greater Arab Maghreb.

[Guy—in French] (Sidi) Guy, PANA. Your Majesty, the OAU and the Arab League to which the five Maghreb countries belong have been exerting efforts since 1980 and 1964 respectively to set up economic groupings on a larger scale. I would like to know whether there had been contacts—in between the Zeralda summit and the Marrakech summit—to coordinate the initiatives that have been taken elsewhere and the future Maghreb entity that has just been born. My second question, if you permit me, Your Majesty, is to ask where and when will the third summit take place?

[Hassan—in French] Your question is quite relevant. I am glad that it was asked. Our concern for the 3 days we have been meeting here in Marrakech has been to set up the Maghreb entity, but above all to ensure that it does not ignore its traditional, time-honored friends whether they be in the Arab world or whether they belong to Africa. We decided, spontaneously, all of us, that once this Maghreb has taken shape in, God willing, 6 months—the time needed to set up the institutions—it will be very careful with the African problems in particular, and it will have extremely privileged relations with our African neighbors. Furthermore, in one of the clauses of the treaty, which will be published soon, it is stipulated that this Maghreb Union remains open to other countries which would like to join it.

Therefore, I am happy to say, through the press here—whether national or international, and particular African—to my African brothers that our first concern in the Maghreb is to clearly show that our entity will not be a citadel between us and our African brothers. Quite the contrary. In the first stage we will have a very privileged rapport, whether bilaterally or in a collective manner, and to stress our will we have stipulated this in writing in the treaty. I do not remember the exact clause but when the treaty is published I think that many a worry will be lifted.

[Al-Jay—in French] Samir al-Jay, Radio Mediterranee Internationale. Your Majesty, pragmatism and realism are the two words spoken most often not only by Maghreb political officials, but also by economists. If Your Majesty permits, I would like to ask two questions about this new view of the Maghreb situation and Maghreb solidarity. The first question is of an economic nature. [words indistinct] communications, what are the reasonable hopes of cooperation and coordination of the national economic measures in relation to the greater regional bloc?

My second question, if Your Majesty permits, deals with the new view of the political situation. The birth certificate of the Union of the Arab Maghreb seems to imply the de facto, one might say, death certificate of the SDAR or at least a reduction in the separatist movement of the Polisario to its congruent portion. Have the heads of state of the four other member countries of the Union of the Arab Maghreb given you the impression that they now consider this matter an inter-Moroccan affair, and what place do the Saharan separatists occupy in the current Maghreb concerns. Thank you.

[Hassan—in French] I asked at the beginning—and [word indistinct] I will reiterate—the questions at this news conference should be questions concerning the subject of the greater Maghreb, they should not tackle secondary questions. I will, however, answer your second question. Let us begin with the first one: During a number of interviews and news conferences, I expressed my opinion on the regional blocs, and on the conditions which they had to fulfil, and one did not have to be a sorcerer or a great scholar to realize at the beginning that beyond feelings, brotherly links, and common features—such as religion and language—there had to be a minimum level of features in common, or similarities, on the level of socioeconomic or social systems.

Thus, it would be impossible to imagine that a country of COMECON, for example—without thinking about its legal system—could be part of West Europe, any more than a member of the Common Market would, in my opinion, unless it changed its economic and social legislation, be able to be received in the COMECON club. This applies to all regional blocs, and I think that if one looks at, for example, the Arab League, the great family of the Arab League, there are certain difficulties sometimes in speaking the same language. It is not that we make different analyses of political problems or geopolitical problems. No, it is that our geostrategic concepts in the areas of economics, trade, and the freedom of circulation of goods, wealth, and people, do not have the necessary and vital consensus for harmonious cohabitation.

This disparity, which in my opinion is extremely detrimental to regional blocs, existed in the Maghreb. I have always said that the economic and social system of Algeria—between Morocco and Tunisia, let us say, just looking at these three central countries—represented a kind of abyss or void which needed to be filled either by bringing Morocco and Tunisia, and let us say now Libya and Mauritania, closer to Algeria on an economic and social level. Or it was necessary to ask Algeria to become less radical on an economic and social level.

I think that this fear has now been cleared up because Algeria, its president and its people, understood perfectly well that integration into the Maghreb, the taking in hand of their future by the Algerians, required an internal opening—a system in which more than one party could exist, a taking on of responsibility in the area of the management of affairs, whether they be municipal or national. In the economic field, Algeria had to tune in to the wavelength of the time. This is why in the constitution bill, we have seen that the president proposed to put to referendum—in other words, to the will of the Algerian people—an economic and social way of life completely different from the previous one.

In doing so, the Algerian governers and officials, with the head of state at their head, have certainly not only taken into consideration the Maghreb requirements, but they have also taken into consideration the drastic worldwide evolution in the concepts of liberal economies and state-controlled economies. We are very happy to see that next door to us this country—a brother which has experienced 130 years of occupation and 7 years of war, and which has been deprived of individual, collective, economic, and commercial freedoms—has at last achieved what always motivated its fight for emancipation and independence.

So, I think—to come back to your question—that the Maghreb has now furnished itself with the elements and the components for the establishment of an entity capable of harmonzing its own economies, and thus of a nature to be a logical interlocutor with its future partners, or its future competitors. So that is the first question, and I must tell you that we are all very optimistic with regard to the cruising speed at which we expect to move ahead, because many papers have been signed and they have been studied beforehand, naturally, and we believe that we will be able to put them rapidly into practice.

As for the second question, I must tell you that it has never been the subject of a plenary session, whether on camera or openly. We have never discussed this problem which you mention in the second question. We have never discussed it among the five of us. We could not refrain from talking about it because it is, all the same, a thorn in the foot of all. If we have at all mentioned it, it is always in bitter terms and with a certain bitterness. Indeed we could have done without this problem, which is really annoying, not to say tiresome. It is a nuisance and bothers everyone. Naturally, we are all from the Maghreb, we are all brothers, and we want our fraternity to develop as rapidly as possible and in all possible areas, without restriction, whether mental or material. We have discussed it, not to call it up, magnify it, or give it excessive dimensions, but to see if we could get rid of this banana peel.

From the moment all partners agree that we have something here—a grain of sand which is preventing the engine from operating—well, if we are good mechanics, this grain of sand, this cog which is stuck, can disappear within the briefest possible period of time. However, one can not say that among the five of us there are advocates who are more or less keen on one particular development in the Sahara rather than another.

[Amrani—in French] Bahia Amrani, from the BBC. This morning the constituent act was signed. Can you tell us what the next phase will be? From a general point of view, what is Your Majesty's assessment of the new dynamism in the Maghreb, its chances of success and its limitations?

[Hassan—in French] First of all, I hope it will not have limitations and that it will be limited only by time. As for its chances, I think after all, as they say in fairy tales for children, we have acted in such a way that all the most beneficial fairies in the world are present around the cradle to bless this birth and help it grow in happiness and wisdom.

At what speed? It is certain that the speed will be the one that we would like to give it. The main thing is, there is the will to go fast but in an orderly manner. Naturally it is not sufficient to go fast; we must first of all agree if we should drive on the right or the left-hand side. Second, we must know what horsepower we are going to use and if after all we are going to run with regular, diesel or premium. The main thing is that we run. We must make sure that the administrative machinery and procedures are in tune.

Our governments will undoubtedly have to set up a body outside the cooperation bodies. It must be a legislative body empowered to examine the existing texts, be they laws, decrees, or orders, which are not compatible with a given dynamism and a given finality. All this will naturally require further thought and work but I believe that we can manage to set up two [word indistinct] or two separate engines, one for thought and tuning and the other for propulsion. What is ready should be put into operation and what is not ready should be bettered.

I personally think that by the end of my chairmanship, which should occur in 6 months—we have decided that the chairmanship should rotate every 6 months—I think that a number of things can be done especially at the level of the movement of property and people, at the level of customs—we have worked it out very well—and at the cultural and educational levels. We are well ahead in these fields, and these are after all very important fields. However, as I have said, we have given it all the chances of success. As for the limitations, let us hope that there will not be any. As for the rest, it is a matter of continuous work.

[Berriche—in French] Omar Berriche of EL MOUDJAHID, Algeria. Your Majesty, the principle of the circulation of persons and goods, and perhaps of capital, is one of the short-term objectives of the Union of the Arab Maghreb. Does the unequal development of the Arab Maghreb countries risk obstructing the realization of the objective of economic integration and complementarity, even the social balance sought by the union?

Another question, if Your Majesty permits. Does the setting up of the union mean that in the future priority will be given to multilateral relations at the expense of bilateral relations?

[Hassan—in French] Well, I think we will have to agree either at the end of this period or at the beginning of the next chairmanship. We will have to agree on a basic principle or principles. As you know, at the beginning, Europe, before fixing as an objective a greater European market open to all, was careful to consider the possibilities and specific character of each. In the beginning stage it cultivated and exploited the domains where this or that country is strongest, and then allowed the other countries join it. Efforts were also made to avoid disparities and to ensure that there was a certain equality in agriculture, industry, textiles, and other areas. Therefore, before thinking about the possibility that we might have competitive production inside the market, before acting in such a way as to have horizontal planning, not vertical, from Nouakchott to Tripoli, we must first consider our assets, riches, what is advanced in this country and that country, and what requires pushing and encouraging.

I think that these disparities, far from being an obstacle to our common expansion, will be a very important illuminating lantern for us. Surely there is a vacuum behind us, and there are in front of us holes hidden in the grass. We must not see only the grass. This will reqire the work of an expert—and not just state experts. We count also a great deal on the work of private sector people. This is why we encourage the encounters of private groups, whatever their levels, from banks, insurance companies, small, medium and even large industries. Personally, I think that one should look for disparities. One must not push the dust under the carpet. One must not be afraid of saying that such a sector is weak in this country in comparison with another sector; there is no shame in saying it. It is by knowing the weakness of everyone that we will be better able to plan for a certain equality. This is not the frustrating equality which means that we are always mediocre, that we would be very happy to be mediocre together, all five of us, provided that we stay mediocre. No, There should be an ambitious, let us say competitive, equality.

Concerning your second question, I think, and all my brother Maghreb heads of state feel, that bilateral relations, privileged because of geography or other reasons, represent an additional positive motive for all multilateral accords. Tunisia is concluding very important accords with Libya. The more Libya and Tunisia become integrated on an intellectual plane, like Siamese twins, the more positive the Tunisian-Libyan body will be for us. Likewise, Morocco and Algeria have been studying several conventions between them. We are still digging, seeking problems to resolve, and inventing domains for cooperation. I know there are several of them. Well, the more Morocco and Algeria cooperate, the more they will bring a significant quantity of energy, assets, and potential. This is also the case of Mauritania and Morocco, for instance. This has been perfectly understood by the heads of state at their meeting here. They have even encouraged it. Therefore, multilateralism and bilateralism are, to our mind, complementary. [Al-Arasi] Tali' Sa'ud al-Atlasi of the newspaper ANWAL. Your Majesty, will the procedurial framework and statutes of the Arab Maghreb Union—they have not yet been made public—allow every member state to have an affiliation or membership in another regional, political or economic bloc. In the case of Morocco, will Your Majesty continue efforts to gain Moroccan membership in the EC?

[Hassan] There is no doubt that the question is both very delicate and logical. There is one provision which says that nonmember states of the Arab Maghreb group may one day join a united Arab Maghreb. We have agreed that acceptance of such members would be by mutual consent or unanimity and not by voting or by majority. What will this mean for argument's sake if a country of the Arab Maghreb, whichever it may be, wants to join a group without consulting or without having been given the green light by the other states. There is no doubt that this is worth considering. What is the scale of values? Does an internal statute rise above the collective statute or does the collective statute have priority and preference over the internal statute. This is on the one hand. On the other the true and basic question is this: Will the so-called or supposed affiliation have negative or positive results on the Maghreb group?

If the affiliation of a member causes no harm or can have some good or bring something good, I personally believe that this member should be given the green light so that it can open the way for the others. The question first of all is a political one before it can be an issue of texts or formalities. There is no doubt that if we take the matter at face value in the same way as we interpret the Koran or the sayings of the prophet, we would submerge ourselves in formalities and would not see the extensive shores we ought to reach for.

The second part of your question concerns Moroccan membership in the EC. Personally, I believe that we have to proceed with two wheels; the first is Morocco's application for EC membership. With the other wheel we have to proceed toward enabling the Arab Maghreb as a whole to qualify for applying as a whole for affiliation to the European market. In both cases—as we can say here—the one who is saved extends a helping hand to his brother or the one who arrives there first extends a helping hand to his brother.

If the Moroccan application is accepted there is no doubt that the EC members, before they give the green light or give their consent will have taken into account that Morocco is an indivisible part of a union—and not only a sentimental one but a political and economic and organized union. If they give Morocco the right of membership they will have taken this into consideration. Implicitly they will have said yes to the Maghreb group as a whole.

If we proceed with the other wheel and if this other wheel is faster than the single wheel of Morocco and the Arab Maghreb as a whole enjoys all the characteristics and essentials and nonessentials, thanks be to God. The Arab Maghreb as a whole could join as a member with obligations and rights as a full or three quarters member or whatever in the EC.

[Bradley—in French] Nadia Bradley of LE LIBERAL. Gulf Cooperation Council, Arab Cooperation Council, Greater Arab Maghreb Union today—the world seems to be heading more and more toward large blocs, and one observes that from the Atlantic to Asia, or from Marrakech to Bahrain, the Arab world today is governed by several structures. Do you think, Your Majesty, that these structures may be able one day to act in concert? Also, how do you think that they are being seen by the great powers?

[Hassan—in French] It is certain that recently there is...finally—considering the AIDS virus and all the influenzas that move, change, and inflict so much harm on mankind—there is at last a benificial virus of peace, detente, regionalization, entente and groupings. Finally. One cannot but congratulate oneself for this. No, when you speak to me about different structures, if you are meaning different internal structures concerning the countries which are members of these blocs, I have said what I thought at the beginning: the economic and social contradictions between partners wanting to set up a company or an association are sometimes deadly disparities. If these are just disparities of a political regime then Europe is made up of constitutional monarchies as well as republics. If the point at issue is geographical disparities, governed by climate, neighborliness, trade, and other things, then I think that presently, thanks to telecommunications, to quick transportation, to all the progress we made, and to God, mankind has at its disposal the means of overcoming these geographical disparities and ensuring that the wagons are attached to each other.

Now, even the great powers depend on a certain number of international blocs. Presently, the great powers have just one idea in their heads: disarming on the nuclear level and trying to face up to the great problems with which we are going to live and of which we are ignorant, but of which they themselves are not ignorant. There is the problem of the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect, and pollution. The great powers pollute more than anyone. I think we are moving toward a decade, if not decades, of lull, let us say of harmony, peace, and quiet.

At last we can only be satisifed to see that the virus is contagious. We hope that the Arab world also ends up setting up regional blocs, which would give a more important value to the Arab League, and which would lead us at last, God willing, to review the Arab League charter As long as we have not revised the Arab League Charter, I do not think we will be able to face up to our own difficulties and those around us.

Now, I am going to choose at random three questions and then stop there. You there.

[Unidentified IZVESTIYA correspondent—in French] Correspondent of IZVESTIYA, Moscow, on behalf of the Soviet press. Your Majesty, the Arab Maghreb Union was born at a time of great change in the world, change characterized by the spirit of dialogue, the settlement of regional crises, priority to universal values, and by the search for the path of survival for mankind. Can one say that the setting up of this union is also a Maghreban response to these changes? And how do you see the role of the Arab Maghreb Union in this context?

[Hassan—in French] First, I do not understood the end of the question. Could you please repeat it, or pose it in another way?

[Unidentified IZVESTIYA correspondent—in French] The essence of my question is: Can one say that the setting up of this union is also a Maghrebian response to the changes occuring in the world?

[Hassan—in French] Yes, I think that this Maghreb Union is a response, an encouraging response to the great changes, and when I say great changes I mean great changes on the scale of the great powers. It means this: You move toward detente between you, but this detente must also exist between your friends. Therefore, the more the other countries, the developing countries or the developed countries, outside the great powers constitute blocs, the more difficult it will be for either of the great powers to play detente between them and to sow discord in other lands. In fact, it is a guarantee for detente between the great powers that this similar detente on a smaller scale is taking place between their traditional friends. It is not possible to enter into embraces while delivering kicks under the table. Let there be detente from top to bottom, between the great, the small, and the medium-sized, and the result of this can only be beneficial for all. This is the answer I think I should give you.

[AL-MADINAH reporter] 'Abd al-Salam [name indistinct], Saudi AL-MADINAH newspaper. Your Majesty, it has been said that the leaders of the Arab Maghreb countries are to send special envoys to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Cooperation Council to explain the objectives of the Arab Maghreb Union. Are you indeed, Your Majesty, going to take this step and is it possible to look forward to some coordinating formula among these unions?

[Hassan] This has not been raised at all, but, thanks be to God, the Arab Maghreb, the GCC and the new council just born, thanks be to God, are all members of the bigger family of the Arab League. We agreed to send this document to the United Nations and regional organizations, such as the Nonaligned Movement, the Arab League, and the Islamic Conference Organization, after the constitutional endorsement, God willing. There is no doubt that when this document reaches the Arab League it will be able to consider this union, as will the countries of the two cooperation councils, the old and the new, together or separately. There is no doubt that it would be possible to call for a summit conference, not to consider the daily political issues [words indistinct] but to think about the fate, coordination, and fraternity, if not mixing or coordination among the three groupings from the economic-political aspect and from the commercial aspect. This indeed may give new impetus to and breath new life into the Arab League and its member states.

[BBC reporter] [Name indistinct] from the BBC Arabic Service. Your Majesty, while waiting for integration between Morocco, as you have said, and the Maghreb states with the EC, what would be the future position of the Maghreb Union with regard to the EC? What would be its position in the near future? What are the main features characterizing the structure of the Maghreb Union?

[Hassan] The position of the Maghreb states as a whole can only be a positive position, a position of one who hopes and wishes that the Maghreb would be taken into consideration, that Maghreban efforts would be taken into account. Naturally, while wishes that are not supported by realism, productivity, and growth are nice, and sweet, they are unfortunately hollow wishes. Therefore, while we should pin our hopes on the EC, once one makes up one's mind one should go ahead with the decision. We should work while hoping that our work receives its due appreciation and consideration.

Undoubtedly, and with regard to the structure of the Maghreb, the step we have taken today is just one step. However, it is a collective step in which there is no hesitation or reservation. The meetings and talks we had were characterized by frankness. I am not talking here about the ugly kind of frankness, full of grudges and blame. On the contrary this frankness was characterized by a relaxed atmosphere, light-heartedness and jokes. We covered all the problems, and we did not ignore any issues that might spoil the atmosphere. On the contrary, we tabled all the problems, and we agreed to find solutions to some of them now. We agreed that some others need more time.

As I always say: Politics is like agriculture whereby time plays its role as seasons play their role with regard to fruits, plants, wheat, or corn. Thank God, I believe that the beginning was good.

I will take the opportunity from this question and answer to say my concluding remarks. Thank God, the beginning was a beginning of serious and responsible people who know very well that they are all being judged by the test of credibility in the eyes of their peoples. In this connection, belief in the Maghreb and the aspiration for the Maghreb are not part of natural aspirations. It is a sacred aspiration of the whole Maghreb. It has one unique deepness. No country can claim that such aspiration is deeper in one country than in another country. Quite the opposite—everybody was feeling that he was standing a critical test of credibility in front of those present now and those who will come in the future. All of us have worked, and God is witness, according to our independent judgement and power helped by Almighty God, by our faith as individuals, and by the great incentive which is the faith of our people.

We have worked to give our present and future action a framework which will enable us, whatever the circumstances, to proceed with suitable speed without fear of any mechanical or legal fault because it was fundamentally the political incentive—that is, the individual or collective incentive of responsibility—and the sacred incentive which represents the dreams of our fathers and grandfathers, personifies our aspirations now and guarantees the future of our rising and future generations for a better life and for a role in the international community at a higher level. I thank you all and may God's peace be upon you.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat, Shevardnadze To Meet After Arens Leaves

LD2102151389 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Concerning the meeting between Shevardnadze and Mr Yasir 'Arafat, expected tomorrow in Cairo, it was reported on the news that the agenda of the Israeli foreign minister's visit to Egypt was altered so that the Soviet-Palestinian meeting will take place after the Israeli minister leaves Egyptian soil. Palestinian sources reported that Mr Yasir 'Arafat insists he will not go to Egypt while Arens is there.

PLO Statement on Meeting

JN2102183289 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] PLO Executive Committee spokesman affirmed yesterday that the meeting between leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] with Soviet Foreign Minister Comrade Eduard Shevardnadze on Wednesday [22 February] embodies the understanding between the Soviet and Palestinian leaderships over the various stands and international position enjoyed by the PLO. This came in a statement by the official spokesman of the PLO Executive Committee yesterday. Following is the text of the statement:

Brother Abu 'Ammar, PLO Executive Committee chairman and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, will tomorrow, Wednesday, meet in Cairo with Soviet Foreign Minister Comrade Eduard Shevardnadze. The PLO sees this meeting as very important because it reflects the high level of Soviet-Palestinian coordination and embodies the understanding over the stands between the Palestinian and Soviet sides, which began with the historic meeting between brother Abu 'Ammar and Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev in April, 1988.

This meeting also derives its importance from being the first meeting at this level between the two sides after the declaration of the establishment of the Palestinian state, which the Soviet Union recognized, the political resolutions issued by the latest PNC [session], the huge international support the Palestine question has been gathering, and the international prominent position enjoyed by the PLO and its political, national, and realistic line.

Comrade Shevardnadze's visit to the region reflects Soviet concern over the issue of achieving peace in the Middle East and the necessity of activating efforts to establish a just and permanent peace in light of the international detente policy followed by the Soviet Union, which it also seeks to entrench.

The PLO believes that the meetings during this visit will expediate Arab efforts in preparation for the international peace conference in the Middle East. They will also prepare the climate and quicken the convening of this conference.

Hurani on PLO-Soviet Contacts, Syrian Ties

JN1802174989 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 16 Feb 89 pp 1, 18

[By Rashid Khashanah]

[Text] Tunis—PLO Executive Committee member 'Abdallah Hurani has said friendly circles, particularly the Soviet Union, which cares for the unity of the Arab stand at the international conference, have asked the Palestinian leadership—in recent contacts between the two parties—about relations with Syria. The PLO replied that it is ready for coordination with all the Arab parties concerned with the international conference. The PLO had proposed that consultations be held among the five Arab parties, namely, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, the PLO, and Lebanon, he said.

Hurani explained that during the recent meeting between Yasir 'Arafat and King Husayn, 'Arafat noted the importance of coordination with Syria, even if there are differences between Syria and the PLO. The Palestinian leadership raised this issue once again before the Soviet side in reply to its queries about Palestinian-Syrian relationship. Afterward, Soviet sources gave information to the PLO affirming that the Soviets raised this issue before the Syrians and that Syria does not object to opening a dialogue with the PLO should the latter so request, he said.

Hurani added: We believe the question is: Which party will request dialogue? There must be signs to encourage the continuation of dialogue so it will not stop in the middle of the road as has happened on more than one occasion. Moreover, there should be guarantees for the success of dialogue, and confidence should also be available. Our brothers in Syria should also express their good intentions toward the PLO in more than one form and field so that there will be successes on which to establish future relations.

Hurani said: All Arab states, except Syria, have recognized the Palestinian state. What draws attention is that Syria welcomed Egypt's recognition and regarded it as a positive step, so why should Syria not take the same step? Hurani asserted that if Syria embarks on such steps, it will open horizons for action and genuine dialogue. At any rate, the PLO will remain ready for consultations and coordination on the condition that the other party has the same desire to attain a formula in the dialogue, he added. Hurani pointed out that Lebanon's Al-Huss and Al-Husayni refused to meet with Yasir 'Arafat in Tunis despite the fact that the Lebanese issue cannot be discussed without discussing the Palestinian situation in Lebanon. He asserted that the reception of

General Michel 'Awn by the PLO Executive Committee chairman was not taken against Syria. He pointed out that the PLO cannot separate this refusal to meet with 'Arafat from the Syrian stand because there are no negative stands between the PLO and both Al-Huss and Al-Husayni. Therefore, the Syrian side should show positive signals to open a genuine horizon between the PLO and Syria, he added.

Replying to a question, Hurani asserted that the recent Executive Committee meetings in Tunis did not discuss the formation of an Executive Committee delegation to visit Syria. He denied this topic was placed on the agenda of the recent Palestinian leadership meetings.

Yasir 'Arafat Interview With CBS Published

JN2102174889 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic
19 Feb 21 p 24

[By Hisham Milhim]

[Text] Washington—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has said that he now sees "a historic opportunity to achieve a genuine peace between the Palestinians and Israelis." He called for guaranteeing this peace in the future by establishing an economic union similar to the Benelux agreement comprising Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. He said that this union should consist of Jordan, Israel, Palestine, and Lebanon. He noted that this union would constitute the basic guarantee for a comprehensive, just, and lasting solution. This came in a television interview with the CBS network carried within the "60 Minutes" program. AL-QABAS has obtained a prerelease of the text of this interview. 'Arafat added that peace will not be on paper only "but should be implemented through joint projects and a Marshall Plan in the region," projects that are supported by "the United States, the EC, Japan, and OPEC."

Asked if he wants the Soviets to take part in these efforts, 'Arafat answered: "Including the Soviets, together with international coordination, to achieve peace in the region."

CBS will air the interview this evening.

Asked if Israel will accept such an arrangement, 'Arafat answered: "They must search for a solution to live next to us. We are ready, and we want their answers." 'Arafat said: "We are tired of the bloodshed. We want peace for our children as well as theirs. Otherwise, we will blame ourselves, and they will blame themselves. The coming generation will not respect us. This is a historic opportunity, and it will be criminal if we lose it."

Answering a question on U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's criticism of the armed struggle in the wake of the recent clashes between the resistance men and the Israeli occupation in southern Lebanon, 'Arafat said that he wants to ask Baker to help the Lebanese and Palestinians get rid of the Israeli occupation in the south. 'Arafat said that the Palestinians will continue to defend the Palestinian camps against the Israeli aerial attacks and the sea and ground shelling.

When the program moderator asked 'Arafat if he approves of Palestinian operations across the border, 'Arafat interrupted him by saying "no" four times over. 'Arafat affirmed that the Palestinians under occupation have the right to resist the occupation by all means "despite this, and in my capacity as the PLO chairman, since the beginning I have personally instructed our masses in the intifadah [uprising] not to use weapons. And this was not easy."

When 'Arafat was told that despite this Israel refuses to talk with him, he answered: "Not Israel, not Israel, it is the Israeli Government, because in accordance with a recent poll 54 percent of the Israeli masses accepted and announced their agreement on opening a dialogue with the PLO."

'Arafat added that the objective of the Israeli Government is still the liquidation of the PLO. 'Arafat once again affirmed the existence of "indirect contacts" between the PLO and the Israeli Government through certain channels, including Palestinians under the occupation, Europeans, and UN officials. He said that these contacts are "serious." He said that Israel began these contacts to reach "a truce in southern Lebanon as we agreed in 1981 before the Israeli invasion. They asked me to repeat this truce." (Israel recently denied similar statements by 'Arafat.)

'Arafat noted that he is exerting all his efforts to disclose the identity of those responsible for the American Pan Am blast. When asked if he believes the press reports true that the Ahmad Jibril organization is responsible for the explosion, 'Arafat answered: "If this is true we will punish him, but this must be proven." When asked who will prove it, 'Arafat said: "The U.S. Administration, the FRG, and us." He added that he has no evidence of Jibril's responsibility. "And I am sure that they were not Palestinians."

When asked about the ongoing efforts to achieve a reconciliation between him and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, 'Arafat answered: "Well, I am not against them."

'Arafat added that he wants new American President George Bush "to give momentum to the peace process and to convene the international conference to resolve the Middle East problem, specifically the Palestine question."

At the end of the interview, the journalist asked 'Arafat to give his frank opinion on certain Israeli leaders such as Ben-Gurion, 'Arafat answered: "To the Israelis he is a prophet".

[Question] Do you respect Ben-Gurion?

['Arafat] Certainly. He is my enemy, but I respect him because he succeeded in achieving something for his people.

[Question] Do you want to become like Ben-Gurion?

['Arafat] I am not [like Ben-Gurion]. I want to be Yasir 'Arafat only.

[Question] Shamir?

['Arafat] It would be better not to talk about him, because he is still in power, and he might agree to achieve peace with me and play a role similar to that of Begin and Al-Sadat.

[Question] Can you imagine yourself negotiating with him?

['Arafat] Why not?

[Question] At a negotiating table with Yitzhaq Shamir?

['Arafat] Why not? With whom am I going to achieve peace? With my friends? With my friends, I do business, but with my enemies I will achieve peace.

[Question] In your lifetime?

['Arafat] Certainly. I can see it.

Khalaf Dialogue With Egyptian Committee Detailed

JN1702154989 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 14 Feb 89 p 6

[Excerpts] The dialogue with the Egyptian committee for solidarity lasted 3 hours, half of which reporters were allowed to record and the other half they were not. Between the two parts, Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf] commented jokingly: This equipment frightens us and does not allow us to talk freely. It is only natural for the second part to be more intriguing, journalistically speaking at least. During the second half, he discussed with great frankness the methods and means of coordination among the intifadah [uprising] leaders inside, the problems of issuing a Palestinian passport, and the Arab foreign ministers' comments on this measure. He also talked about Syria, Al-Asad, Elie Hubayqah, Khaddam, the Gulf states and their capacity to support the intifadah, and Yemen. He even proposed for discussion the idea of forming a unified Arab army.

He also discussed his concept of the future of the Palestine question, an independent Palestine, and the confederation with Jordan and conditions for it. All these issues were brought up. Unfortunately, we will not be able to say more about them than this in accordance with what we, the journalists—the eight of us who were there—promised the Palestinian leader Salah Khalaf. Our consolation is that the first part is not much less informative than the part banned from publication. The meeting, which was held in the Al-Jazirah Club in Cairo, was attended by a number of public figures. [passage omitted]

Abu Iyad said that the European response was good, but not enough. He then clarified his statement, saying that the British stand, for example, has improved immensely in comparison to its previously negative position. As for the French, his comment was: They have progressed one step forward and changed the office to a legation, which is a middle step between an office and an embassy. Other than that, no progress has been made. Palestinian officials have not yet visited Paris. As for Spain, Greece, and Italy, their positions are actually more progressive than the rest of the Western European countries. However, together with France, these countries say that they do not want to take a stand that might divide the EEC and affirm that they will attempt to reach a more developed stand than the Venice stand of 1980 with the rest of the EEC countries. At any rate, as Abu Iyad says, the European stand needs more action.

As for the U.S. stand, it has changed since dialogue on the ambassadorial level was started with the PLO. Their ambassadors have now been allowed to meet with PLO representatives at public parties and shake hands with them. They used to turn their backs to them before—no more than that.

Israel's stand is still frozen and blocked. They still wager on the time factor. We actually know that they are preparing one plan after the other to deal the intifadah military and political blows. When they talk of elections, all they want to do is divert people's attention to elections and away from the intifadah. Elections, of course, mean dividing the Palestinian villages among the candidates. They also help them to gain European public opinion in their favor on the grounds that Israel wants to negotiate with people who have been elected. But, we have as a precedent the elections of 1976, in which all the PLO candidates won. Nine of them were deported and the others subjected to terrorism. No one is left other than the mayor of Janin and his colleague, the mayor of Tulkarm.

They also want it to appear that the solution is coming from the inside only, forgetting that there are 4 million people waiting to return to their homeland. This is not the only information we have about the Israeli stand; we also have information on many military plans that we expect Israel to carry out in Lebanon and on other plans to assassinate PLO leaders to draw world public attention away from the intifadah. Therefore, we do not rule out the possibility of military operations in Lebanon, which may spread, on a narrow scale, to Syria. There is also an intention to fabricate a battle in northern Jordan to create a new situation that everyone will talk about to the exclusion of the intifadah.

All these plans will only be implemented after Shamir has concluded his expected visit to the United States.

We also expect an Israeli test balloon during Shamir's visit to the United States. This balloon has features that we can observe by following current Israeli statements. In addition to their proposal for elections and negotiations with those elected, they will offer international supervision of these elections and a plan for autonomy that will continue for years, after which there can be a discussion of the destiny of the land and people—something of this sort. Through these proposals, they will try to say to the world that they have offered something and will wait for our comment on, or rejection of, these proposals.

We feel that this year—1989—and the first half of next year constitute the appropriate time to reach a basic step on the road of settlement. Otherwise, the matter will go on for another 4 years until the congressional elections, and the vicious circle will begin again. Therefore, I demand a serious Arab stand to fortify the Palestinians against the expected dangers. When I say an Arab stand, I mean the states with power—Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Syria as well. How can we talk about an international conference while we are turning our backs on Syria, and it is doing the same thing?

I repeat that if no Arab pressure is exerted this year, the issue will grow more complicated. The Soviets have promised us to raise the Middle East issue in the first summit meeting with U.S. President Bush.

The last subject that Abu Iyad touched on was terrorism, following a question by writer Muhammad Sayyid Ahmad on the definition of terrorism according to the U.S. viewpoint and its relation to the Palestinian national struggle. The Palestinian leader said:

In no session have we ever agreed with the United States on a specific definition on terrorism. We understand it as "military action" outside the occupied territory. We have not changed this so far, and we did not commit ourselves to any word that goes beyond the Cairo declaration.

In the United States, a new book on terrorism has been published. Its introduction, which was written by President Bush, states that terrorism is "the murder of innocent civilians." The introduction also states, "There are people who say they are liberation movements. We believe there is a distinction between liberation movements and other acts of terrorism."

Abu Iyad denied that the PLO has decided to abandon military action inside the occupied territories. He said that there is always thinking about carrying out such acts, provided they are carried out at specific areas, such as the "Dimona operation."

PLO's Faruq Qaddumi Views Peace Prospects

JN1902203089 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1850 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 19 Feb (WAKH)—A senior Palestinian official has voiced his confidence that the continuation of the Palestinian intifadah [uprising] will finally force Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories and accept the international peace conference on the Middle East. He pointed out that the PLO will not relinquish any of its legitimate rights, foremost of which are its right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

In a statement to WAM, Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, said that peace in the Middle East can be achieved only if the PLO participates in the international conference along with the other parties through an independent or within a joint Arab delegation on the condition that the Palestinian delegation and the other delegations be independent.

Regarding plans to form a provisional Palestinian government, Qaddumi said that the time is not ripe now to form such a government and that it will be formed as soon as political and international circumstances become clear. He pointed out that during its recent session in Algiers, the PNC entrusted the PLO to carry out the duties of this government until it is formed.

Regarding the convening of an Arab summit, Qaddumi said that efforts are still being exerted to convene it, stressing the importance of the summit to solve Arab differences and achieve Arab solidarity in favor of the Arab nation and the Palestine question.

Qaddumi also explained that contacts are under way to resume dialogue with the United States, pointing out that dialogue for the sake of dialogue will not serve peace and that the United States should change its bias toward Israel in order to achieve peace in the Middle East.

Qaddumi affirmed that the PLO does not wager on the United States to pressure Israel to force it to accept the international peace conference, but it wagers on the continuation and escalation of the intifadah, which, he said, has created a split in Israeli ranks that may lead to a large-scale internal confrontation. He added that this means that Israel is heading toward its destruction.

Qaddumi then praised the support extended to the Palestinian people and their brave intifadah in the occupied territories by the UAE and its president, Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan.

Qaddumi also said that the PLO highly appreciates His Highness Shaykh Zayid's positions and his continuous and firm support for the blessed Palestinian intifadah. He also affirmed that the Arab countries can play a greater role in supporting the intifadah by extending material and moral assistance to guarantee its continuation and escalation until the Zionist enemy withdraws from the occupied Arab territories and the Palestinian people can establish their independent state on their national soil.

PNC Speaker Welcomes Launching of ACC

JN1802075489 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 18 Feb 89 pp 16, 12

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] PNC Speaker Shaykh 'Abd al-Hamid al-Sa'ih has welcomed the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC]. In an exclusive statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B, he said: On this noble and historical day, we are happy and pleased with the proclamation of the ACC.

He said that the ACC, which was led and conceived by His Majesty King Husayn, is the first step toward the unification of the Arab nation.

Shaykh al-Sa'ih added that the launching of the ACC will provide considerable help to solving the Palestine question, tip the balance in the Arab-Israeli conflict in favor of the Arabs, and serve all Arab issues. [passage omitted]

Egypt

Foreign Minister Shevardnadze Continues Visit

Meets Sidqi, 'Abd al-Majid

NC2102133289 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi received Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze this afternoon. The meeting was attended by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

Dr Abd al-Majid had earlier held a round of talks with the Soviet foreign minister. The talks dealt with the importance of establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East through the convocation of an international peace conference. The Soviet minister called for consultations between Security Council members and the United Nations.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid also presented definite proposals to activate the peace process. He declared Egypt's support for UN and Security Council efforts to prepare for an international peace conference.

The two countries' views were identical. They also agreed on the need to change the Israeli stand, the need for Israel's withdrawal, and the need for the Palestinian people to retrieve their legitimate rights.

The Soviet minister praised Dr 'Abd al-Majid's visit to Moscow last May. He said that President Mubarak's coming visit to Moscow will be the crowining achievement of relations between the two countries.

Comments on Talks

NC2102151589 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1430 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 21 Feb (MENA)—Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi received in his office this afternoon Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. The meeting was attended by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and the ministers of industry, economy, and international cooperation.

Following the meeting that lasted 1 ½ hours, Shevardnadze said that the discussions dealt with some of the important issues of developing and strengthening bilateral relations. The program for bilateral cooperation in the future was also discussed, he added. He said that this program will be discussed exhaustively at the meeting of the two countries' joint governmental committee, which will be held in Cairo with the aim of developing bilateral cooperation in various fields.

Dr Sidqi said after the meeting that definite projects of bilateral cooperation will be planned during the meeting of the Egyptian-Soviet committee during the first half of March. He said that bilateral relations are good and are progressing daily. He added that he reviewed with Shevardnadze the areas of cooperation between Egypt and the Soviet Union in the economic, trade, industrial, and electricity fields.

Responding to questions, Dr Sidqi stressed that Egypt is exerting its utmost efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and is endeavoring to hold the international conference for establishing peace in the region. He referred here to President Mubarak's repeated statements on this issue.

Replying to a question on the present position of Soviet-Israeli relations, Shevardnadze said that this position is known to all and that relations are not considered normal. He added that the Israeli leadership knows of the means that would return the relations to normal.

Replying to another question on Israel's insistence on refusing to enter into a dialogue with the PLO and the Soviet Union's role here, Shevardnadze said: We will try to convince Israel of this.

Presents 'Definite' Proposals

NC2102162189 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1550 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 21 Feb (MENA)—Responsible sources in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said that the bilateral talks held today between the Egyptian and Soviet sides were extensive and were characterized by a spirit of cordiality and fraternity. The sources added that the two sides discussed the situation in the Middle East and the means of giving an impetus to the peace efforts in the region.

In statements to MENA, these sources said that Eduard Shevardnadze presented definite Soviet proposals to give an impetus to the peace process and stressed that the Soviet Union will contact the permanent members of the UN Security Council and other UN members to prepare for holding the international peace conference.

The sources added that Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, underlined Egypt's support for the UN efforts to help give an impetus to the peace process. He explained Egypt's view of the Soviet proposals. The two countries agreed to continue their consultations at another session or through diplomatic channels. They also agreed on the importance of action to shift the Israeli stand and convince Israel of the importance of peace, of the complete withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, and of the Palestinians' retrieval of their legitimate rights.

The sources said that the Soviet foreign minister stressed that Dr 'Abd al-Majid's visit to Moscow last May was a boost for bilateral relations. He also expressed his hope that President Mubarak's expected visit to Moscow will be the crowning achievement of bilateral relations.

Soviet Ambassador Discusses Shevardnadze Visit

NC1802124189 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1135 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 18 Feb (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, conferred with Soviet Ambassador in Cairo Gennadiy Zhuravlev today. They discussed the visit which Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze will pay to Egypt from 20 to 23 February as part of his current tour of the region.

The Soviet ambassador described the Soviet foreign minister's visit to Egypt as one of particular importance in view of the strong relations between the two countries and the Soviet Union's interest in promoting the peace process and achieving a peaceful settlement to the Middle East crisis.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid welcomed the visit, especially as it is taking place in circumstances in the international arena that are favorable to the promotion of peace efforts.

On the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan, 'Abd al-Majid stressed Egypt's appreciation over the completion of this withdrawal, which he hoped would be a beginning toward a settlement of the Afghan problem. He said that such a settlement also requires agreement among the Afghan mujahidin factions in order to achieve national reconciliation and to ensure the return of peace to all of Afghanistan.

Meets With Mubarak

NC1902075889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0730 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received Soviet Ambassador in Cairo Gennadiy Zhuravlev today.

Makes Statement

NC1902091489 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0855 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 19 Feb (MENA)—Soviet ambassador in Cairo Gennadiy Zhuravlev has stated that his meeting with President Husni Mubarak today dealt with a number of issues pertaining to Egyptian-Soviet relations. He also said that the discussion of these issues was within the framework of the visit which Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze will pay to Cairo tomorrow, and during which he will meet with President Mubarak. The Soviet Ambassador added that this will be the first visit by such a high-level Soviet official to Cairo for 15 years, indicating that the talks which Shevardnadze will hold with Egyptian officials will center on the Arab-Israeli conflict and Iran-Iraq peace efforts.

The Soviet ambassador said that Shevardnadze will visit Baghdad after departing Cairo. He will also visit Tehran. He stressed the importance of strengthening Egyptian-Soviet relations, and expressed satisfaction with the progress in relations between the two countries in the economic and political fields.

Asked about reports that PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat will meet with Shevardnadze, the Soviet ambassador said that this meeting is expected to take place in Baghdad.

Concluding his statement, the Soviet ambassador expressed the belief that the Soviet foreign minister's visit to Cairo as part of his current Middle East tour will achieve good results.

Shevardnadze, Israel's Arens Meet in Cairo 22 Feb

NC2202082389 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0757 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 22 Feb (MENA)—Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who is visiting Cairo at present, met with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens in the Soviet Embassy in Cairo this morning.

The two officials are expected to discuss the latest developments in the Middle East situation and ways to boost the peace process in order to resolve the Palestinian issue.

The Israeli foreign minister arrived in Cairo on Monday to hold talks with Eduard Shevardnadze on Soviet proposals to settle the Arab-Israeli dispute.

'Abd al-Majid, Arens Hold Discussions 21 Feb

NC2102185789 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] A round of talks was held this afternoon at the Foreign Ministry between Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Israeli Foreign minister Moshe Arens.

The two sides discussed developments in the Middle East regarding efforts to give an impetus to the peace process and the means of finding a just solution for the Palestinian issue through an international peace conference that would guarantee the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. The two sides also discussed the Tabah issue developments and bilateral relations.

'Abd al-Majid on Talks With Arens

NC2102202389 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] At the conclusion of the talks held today with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, said that the talks dealt with many and important issues, foremost of which was how to proceed to give an impetus to the peace process. He added: Peace is precious for us and for the people in the region. We desire it, are seeking it, and adhere to it. He said that discussions were useful and clear, and we agreed to continue the consultations and the exchange of views.

Moshe Arens said the discussions dealt with the measures for building confidence which are present and important for the peace process. He added that he believes that peace between Egypt and Israel is the cornerstone of the comprehensive settlement we are seeking.

Agreement Reached With Israel on Sonesta Hotel

NC2102192989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1858 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 21 Feb (MENA)—Egypt and Israel have reached an agreement under which Egypt will pay to the Israeli side $37 million as compensation for the Sonesta Hotel in Tabah. Moreover, Egypt will pay an additional incentive for the next 5 years under which the Israeli side will get any amount in excess of $6.3 million from the hotel's annual earnings, and up to a maximum of $3 million over the next 5 years.

This was stated by Fu'ad Sultan, minister of tourism and civil aviation and head of the Egyptian delegation to the talks.

As for the Tabah Sonesta Hotel contract, it has been agreed to award this contract to the International Sonesta Company in Boston, the United States of America. The company will receive 12 percent of the total earnings of the hotel up to $7 million, 14 percent for the earnings from $7 to $8 million, and 16 percent for the earnings over $8 million.

A session of talks is currently underway regarding the tourist village in Tabah.

Minister on Agreement, Payment

NC2102211789 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2018 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 21 Feb (MENA)—Fu'ad Sultan, minister of tourism and civil aviation, has stated that during the meeting held this evening by the Egyptian-Israeli committee dealing with the question of compensations to be paid for the tourist facilities in Tabah, it was agreed that Egypt will pay Israel $1.15 million as compensation for the Rafi Nelson tourist village in Tabah.

The minister added that it was agreed that the International Sonesta Hotel Company based in Boston, will run the village temporarily. He indicated that the village is comprised of chalets, restaurants, shower facilities, floating boats, and diving equipment.

He added that the Israeli side had demanded $4 million in compensation for the tourist village.

Minister Sultan explained that the talks between the two sides will resume tomorrow to discuss the Israeli Government's request for a payment of $1 million in compensation for infra-structure work on the beach adjacent to the tourist village.

Minister Sultan said that the agreement on the compensations for the tourist facilities will be signed on 26 February. He indicated that he will submit a report on the outcome of the talks to the prime minister.

AFP: 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid To Visit Israel

NC2102224589 Paris AFP in English 2208 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Excerpt] Cairo, Feb 21 (AFP)—The two-year chill in relations between Israel and Egypt seemed to be coming to an end when Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens announced here late Tuesday that his Egyptian counterpart, 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, had accepted an invitation to visit Israel.

Mr. Arens, making the first visit to Egypt by a senior Israeli official for two years, told a news conference that "trust has been restored" between the two countries, adding "this is a very important element" in the "painful and slow process" towards peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Arens, who is due to confer here Wednesday with the Soviet Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, said that Egypt and Israel agreed that "intensive efforts are required to advance the process."

Mr. 'Abd al-Majid conferred earlier in the day with Mr. Shevardnadze, who is also due to talk to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat during his visit.

"I had the pleasure to invite Dr. 'Abd al-Majid to Israel to pursue our discussions and had the pleasure of hearing him accept," Mr. Arens said.

Earlier, the Israeli minister visited a joint agricultural project in Nubariya, 80 kilometers (50 miles) south of Alexandria.

"This project, which Egyptians and Israelis have made successful, benefits both our countries," he said. "It is an example of the type of relations that Israel and Egypt can develop, and proof of their improvement. [passage omitted]

Israel Requests Activation of Trade Ties

JN1702182889 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 15 Feb 89 p 1

[Text] AL-WAFD has learned from informed diplomatic sources that Israel has recently requested that economic and trade relations with Egypt be activated. Bilateral relations have deteriorated over the past years. Thus, Egypt halted its imports of Israeli products, including gasoline and chicks, which were plagued by an infectious disease.

The diplomatic sources affirmed that Israel requested the Foreign Ministry to provide it with clarifications on an Egyptian decision to deport some agricultural experts when their entry visas expired and another decision to close down a commercial office belonging to an Israeli firm. Moreover, Israel requested that it be provided with clarifications on the reasons behind the Suez Canal Bank's decision to stop its dealings with foreign companies, which used to work as intermediaries between the two states in import-export operations.

AL-WAFD has learned that some Israeli officials claimed that the Egyptian Government and some advisers to the political leadership have placed obstacles in the way of the Egyptian companies and businessmen desiring to initiate cooperation and establish trade and economic ties with Israeli firms.

Yasir 'Arafat Arrives in Cairo 22 Feb

NC2202120589 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 22 Feb (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Cairo from Tunis this afternoon on a visit lasting several days. The Palestinian leader was received by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; PLO representative in Cairo Sa'id Kamal; and members of the PLO office in Cairo.

Mubarak Comments on Arab Issues, U.S., USSR

NC2102092689 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2330 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Cairo, 20 Feb (MENA)—President Muhamamd Husni Mubarak has stressed that the aim of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC], which comprises Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and the YAR, is cooperation in the economic field through action to achieve economic integration and the development of production. He said that this is the basis for the ACC and that there are no other aims, as some believe.

In an interview with the Abu Dhabi paper AL-ITTIHAD, to be published tomorrow, Tuesday, President Mubarak said that Egypt's agreement to the declaration of the establishment of the ACC stemmed from a clear principle; namely that this council is not directed against anyone and does not harm any fraternal Arab country. He stressed that it does not represent an axis. Arab Egypt, he added, is a friend of all its Arab sisters without exception, even if there is a problem with Syria or Libya. He said: It has not even crossed our minds that there should be any hostile action against any fraternal Arab country.

Regarding reports that this quadripartite grouping will become involved in military and political coordination, President Mubarak declared: We as a grouping of four countries will not embark on any political action that is of interest to the Arab nation or that concerns Arab agreements that regulate this coordination. He stressed that military coordination has not been mentioned at all. He added: We will not embark on any military or political coordination unilaterally or without the other Arab countries.

In the interview with AL-ITTIHAD Chief Editor 'Abdallah al-Nuwaysi, President Mubarak spoke on a number of important and international issues for 90 minutes.

Replying to a question, President Mubarak said: The quadripartite grouping did not appear suddenly. It is the result of cooperation, coordination, and joint action by our four Arab countries and the permanent committees at the highest level. When we started to develop this cooperation, we consulted and talked about the issue for more than a year, and Jordan's King Husayn then proposed its formation.

President Mubarak added: When I visited Baghdad, I discussed this grouping at length with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. When a proposal was made that the YAR should join this grouping, I welcomed it and contacted President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. We exchanged views and he informed me of his country's agreement to join the grouping in principle. Mubarak went on: I warmly welcomed this. We are all sisterly Arab countries. He noted that the aim of the ACC is cooperation in the economic field through action to achieve economic integration and the development of production. This is the basis and there are no other aims, as some believe.

President Mubarak went on to say: When the idea of the grouping took shape, my agreement to the declaration of its establishment was based on a clear principle; namely, that this grouping is not directed against anyone, that it does not harm anyone, and that it does not represent an axis. I am not at all in favor of axes. He said that Egypt is a friend of all its Arab sisters without exception, even if there is a problem with Syria or Libya. He added: We have not thought and it has never crossed our minds that there should be any hostile action against any sisterly Arab country. This is absolutely out of the question. Even though our neighbor Libya does certain things we absolutely do not think of carrying out any hostile action against it.

President Mubarak denied reports that the quadripartite grouping will lead to military or political coordination. He said: We in Egypt and the ACC will not embark on any political action that is of interest to the Arab nation or that concerns Arab issues without coordinating with the Arab Countries within the framework of the Arab agreements which regulate this coordination. This is out of the question.

He added that the quadripartite grouping cannot, for example, monopolize the search for a solution to the Palestinian issue. All of us as Arabs are coordinating together within the comprehensive Arab context. We will coordinate with the GCC and with all the Arab countries that have relations with us, out of conviction and with open hearts. This is a pan-Arab issue and does not only affect us, as ACC countries. This also applies to the other issues of our Arab nation.

Commenting on military coordination among the four countries of the grouping, the president noted that this subject has not been raised at all. He stated: We are all members of the Arab nation. The Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] has emerged from the Arab League, as the GCC did. It is impossible for the ACC to adopt a hostile military attitude toward any Arab country. Every Arab must exclude this likelihood from his mind because the tasks of our military forces do not include threats to our Arab brothers. He noted that President Saddam Husayn had asserted this fact in his statement proclaiming the establishment of the ACC.

President Mubarak said: We all are members of the Arab nation and support each other. We all are under the Arab umbrella and part of the Arab system. To make myself clear, we in the quadripartite grouping will not undertake any military or political coordination unilaterally and separately from other Arab countries. The basis is that we should coordinate with our brothers in the Arab nation.

Replying to a question on Arab efforts to improve Egyptian-Syrian relations, President Mubarak declared: We are open and have no complexes about anyone. We are open with Syria and with Libya, too, but on the basis of non-intervention in our internal affairs. I would not want to interfere in Libya's affairs—I do not mean Libya itself—nor would I agree to interfere in Syria's affairs. You know that we do not interfere in anyone's affairs. He pointed out that no Egyptian citizen living in another Arab country has anything to do with its domestic affairs or policies and that he does not join any grouping that could be harmful to the state in which he works.

Regarding the meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Al-'Aqabah, President Mubarak asserted: There was no such meeting. The fact is that my brother King Husayn visited Syria 3 months ago. He told me then: We want to bring the two of you closer. What would you say to a meeting? I replied: I welcome him if he wishes us to meet in Cairo. If he would like, I am ready to meet with him in Amman. The president explained that he did not suggest Damascus as the venue of the meeting, saying: I had earlier suggested to the Syrian president when we were in Kuwait during the last Islamic summit conference that I should go to Damascus. However, he apologized on the pretext that the results of such a meeting must be (?known) in advance. I do not want to impose anything on Syria, nor do I want Syria to impose anything on me. Although we are committed to a peace treaty with Israel, we are capable of making decisions by ourselves and do not need anyone's consent.

President Mubarak went on: We are better qualified to deal with our own issues. Yes, we are Arabs and have not relinquished the Palestinian cause. We are the country that has given the most support to the Palestinian cause. Even our treaty with Israel did no harm to the Palestinian issue. On the contrary, our contacts with Israel have to a great extent facilitated the activation of thew Palestinian issue, as there is one Arab party which speaks to the Israelis. The president asked: Could the Palestinian issue be resolved by using carrier pigeons?

He said: We must sit together and talk. America and Vietnam sat at the negotiating table, while the truce agreement which was concluded in Rhodes was signed by Egypt on one floor and by the Jews on another floor. Our Syrian brothers sat at the table and signed it, and I do not criticize their action because it had to be done.

President Mubarak added: If they are opposed to the Camp David accord, I say that it is made up of two documents. The first includes principles for solving the Egyptian-Israeli problem. The second is a framework for solving the Palestinian issue from all aspects. It includes principles for solving the Palestinian issue.

President Mubarak then asked: Do these principles constitute a treaty? No. He who wishes to follow them and solve his problems can do so. The first document of principles became redundant with the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Therefore, this first document has become worthless. As for the second document, it was Israel that changed its spirit. When the Israelis saw that our brothers in the PLO and the Arab states were against it they changed the entire concept of this document, to the extent that former U.S. President Jimmy Carter was obliged to tell the Israelis: You have changed [word indsitinct].

President Mubarak pointed out in his interview with AL-ITTIHAD that these principles do not constitute a treaty, but are meant to facilitate the negotiating process. Should our brothers in the PLO wish to take these principles as a basis for resolving the Palestinian issue, they are welcome, and if they do not want to, no one can force them to do so.

President Mubarak then asked: What is meant by the cancellation of Camp David, and why do they ask us to cancel it? The Camp David agreement includes a recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, so shall I cancel it? Should I decide to cancel it today, Israel would be extremely happy. Only the Israelis would benefit from such a cancellation, while we Arabs would be the losers. Furthermore, we would lose our credibility if we were to cancel it.

President Mubarak added: Let us return to the issue of my meeting with President al-Asad. King Husayn later came to me and told me that the Syrians are not yet ready for such a meeting. I told him that it is up to them. I do not impose anything on anyone. I extended my hand to President al-Asad in Kuwait; you asked me to meet him and I said it was fine with me.

The president added: Ever since that time, since I was in London in October, there have been no contacts or anything else. The Syrians are making positive statements about us and we say that we are brothers, although I have tolerated a lot of their [words indistinct].

President Mubarak added: President al-Asad is a friend of mine, and on several occasions I solved problems between him and late President Anwar al-Sadat. I know him well and I cannot possibly speak abusively of him, even if he or any of his aides do so of me. I refuse to answer the insults and the vituperations, because I believe this is an outdated thing to do.

Answering a question on the Arab efforts exerted to reconcile Egypt and Libya, President Mubarak said: Many people came to see me in Egypt for this purpose, but nothing materialized. On one of his visits to Cairo, Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] told me that the Libyans are serious about creating a favorable atmosphere. I told him I am ready and that there was nothing between me and the Libyan people.

However, I will not allow the Libyan leader to impose something on us. I do not like anyone to impose anything on us, any more than I impose anything on any other country or interfere in the domestic affairs of any state. What I demand is neighborliness. The president added: I was asked to stop the media campaigns and I immediately did so. Ever since that day, there has been nothing new, although every now and then they say some harsh words in conferences. However, we do not answer them, although we could do so. He added: When we were asked to let the Libyan planes use our airspace to transfer Libyan pilgrims going to the holy places, we agreed. He [Al-Qadhdhafi] wants us to open the road between Egypt and Libya, but we refused because we believe there is an ulterior motive for his request. Therefore, I will not open it, because we have to feel assured first.

President Mubarak went on to say: I asked him to let Egyptian and Libyan civilian planes land in the two countries' airports, but he refused, suggesting that Arab planes do this job instead of Libyan and Egyptian planes. This I refused, so as not to cause any problem between us and any of the Arab states owning these planes should something happen on their [the Libyan] part that could lead to a problem.

President Mubarak added: We welcome the Libyan leader's intentions if they are good. If they are not, let us remain good neighbors. I will not open my borders just so that some people, whom I can do without, can come for a visit.

Regarding the sums owed to the Egyptian laborers who were working in Libya, President Mubarak said that the Libyan Government has failed to pay these sums, and the negotiations over this issue have stumbled.

Asked about reports that Israel is planning to launch an attack on certain Arab states on the pretext that they possess chemical weapons, and about the recent clamor regarding the Al-Rabitah plant in Libya, President Mubarak said: We believe in dialogue and discussion as a civilized way of solving these issues. When they [not further identified] talked about the issue of the Al-Rabitah plant in Libya, we spoke to the Americans and told them that attacking the plant is not the correct way at all, and that there are diplomatic ways of solving such a problem. He added: Libya must not develop this plant to produce unnecessary chemical weapons. We all are able to produce chemical weapons, but there is no need for this method at all.

He said: If the Libyan leader's statement that this is a pharmaceutical plant is true, then let it be a real pharmaceutical plant. There is no need to cause problems and create fears, not only for major European states but also for Arab states, because what guarantees are there for anyone if there are chemical materials?

President Mubarak affirmed: We are with the Libyan leader if the plant is for the production of medicines. We would help in the establishment of a pharmaceutical plant. He said: I spoke with the Americans and told them that the use of military force was not the way to solve such issues. I did not tell Al-Qadhdhafi about this.

He said: As for Israel, I will discuss the matter with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens during his visit to Cairo.

Answering a question about the U.S. role during the term of the new U.S. President George Bush in establishing a just peace in the Middle East, President Mubarak said: President Bush is very well acquainted with the issue and knows about all the problems from the information available to him from various sources. He explained that, like all other U.S. presidents, President Bush must first begin by studying all the issues. He is one of those who does not rush to make decisions. Some say that he is slow in making decisions. The fact is that he studies and makes a complete evaluation of the situation before he thinks of taking action.

He added: The United States is a big power confronted by numerous problems. We, as Arabs, have a role to play. We must not throw the entire burden on the United States. It is our responsibility, too. We still differ about the issue, and we must first agree with each other and not say that the United States has the key to the solution. Otherwise, what will our role be? We do not want to be spectators.

Continuing, President Mubarak told AL-ITTIHAD: We have a responsibility, and we must reach agreement and coordinate our positions in order to have a unified policy on this issue. We are not all in agreement so far. What will the situation be if an international conference is held? We must reach agreement before going to an international conference. We must solve the problem of the delegation to the negotiations before we go to the conference. Otherwise, the world will be laughing at us if Israel agrees to attend an international conference and we have not agreed on the delegation to the negotiations.

President Mubarak added: The United States has an effective role to play. King Husayn will be going to the United States, and I will be meeting with President Bush. We all talk about the U.S. role. God willing, I expect President Bush will play an effective role in solving the Middle East problem just as former President Jimmy Carter did.

Asked about reports that Egypt is making intensive efforts to arrange a meeting in Cairo between Palestinian Leader Yasir 'Arafat and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, President Mubarak said: I have not heard about such a meeting except from the press. No decision has been made about Baker's visit to the area, and there have been no developments in this issue.

He added: The U.S.-Palestinian dialogue issue caused a problem for me with the administration of former President Reagan when I went to the White House and said that the dialogue must start and the PLO must not be disregarded. I caused a big problem there, but I overcame it because I was stating a fact. I was telling the truth and saying what I meant, and not just speaking for public consumption. There was a big fuss then.

President Mubarak affirmed: We were the ones who exerted efforts, in coordination with King Husayn and the Arab states, to start the dialogue. We spoke to Shutlz and to 'Arafat, we went to Al-'Aqabah together. There were problems between 'Arafat and King Husayn, and these problems between them were all settled.

Regarding Egypt's position on developments in the Lebanese crisis, President Mubarak said: We want an independent Lebanon. The problem can be summed up by saying that an Arab country is becoming lost. It has no government, no president, nothing. He affirmed that this is an Arab responsiblity, first and foremost, and no one else's. He said: We, the Arabs, have all caused this problem. The Arab League must play an effective role, and must sit and solve the Lebanese problem. He asserted: It might not be possible to solve the Lebanese problem at an Arab summit. We must first begin with a ministerial committee, which must look for the best ways to solve the problem. What has been happening, however, is that we, as Arabs, pay too much attention to the feelings of this or that person. The problem cannot be solved in this way. It can only be solved if we all let Lebanese people sit around a table to solve their problems.

He noted that as long as there is interference from this or that side, the destruction of Lebanon will continue, and we will be responsible for that. Therefore, we do not take a neutral stand. After the Arab ministerial committee makes a complete study of the Lebanese problem, it will submit proposals for a solution to the Arab summit.

He explained that the Lebanese problem is complicated. But I think, he said, that if the Palestinian problem is solved, the Lebanese problem will also be solved, and Lebanon will once again become an independent state and prosper as before, once all those who have intervened in its affairs have left.

Regarding the outcome of the indirect contacts between Egypt and Iran for the release of the Egyptian prisoners and the reports that the Sultanate of Oman is trying to arrange a meeting between him and Iranian President Khamene'i in Muscat to discuss the future of Iranian-Egyptian relations, President Mubarak affirmed that such reports are unfounded. He said: We do not discuss the issue of the Egyptian prisoners alone, but as part of the issue of Iraqi prisoners as a whole. We cannot talk about the Egyptian alone and ignore the Iraqis. The Egyptians were taken prisoner in Iraq. The problem of prisoners will be solved as part of the Iraqi-Iranian agreement.

Regarding the relations between Egypt and Iran, he said: They asked us, through many ambassadors, to open at least a consulate in Cairo. But we are not considering the matter.

He declared: The Iranians must solve the problem with Iraq and with our brothers in the Gulf states. When they reach an agreement, we will be ready to restore Egyptian-Iranian relations, but not before that. Iraq is negotiating, and we support it until the problem is solved and all the prisoners return, because they are all brothers. As for a meeting between me and Khamene'i, I will meet neither Khamene'i nor Khomeyni.

Asked about the role the Soviet Union could play in the Middle East issue, President Mubarak pointed out that the Soviet role cannot be ignored, since this would only complicate matters. He asked: What good would it do us if we solved this issue through one superpower to the exclusion of the other? He added that the two superpowers consult and coordinate with each other and agree about armaments in the entire world. Therefore, he added, it would be more worthwhile for them to contribute to the solution. This would be the best way of ensuring that a just and comprehensive solution of the issue is found.

President Mubarak said his meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze was the first of its kind in 14 years. He added: We talked about the peace issue, since he had a new plan for peace in the region, and exchanged views on bolstering bilateral relations.

Asked about the date for his visit to Moscow, President Mubarak told AL-ITTIHAD: If I receive an invitation, I will visit Moscow at the appropriate time.

Regarding Egypt's Arab position and the role which he would like the country to play, President Mubarak stated: I cannot talk about Egypt's position when all the brothers in the Arab states know this position well. Egypt will not fall short of helping any Arab brother in time of crisis or under any other circumstances, and this is not just talk, we mean what we say. President Mubarak added: Egypt cannot abandon its brothers ever. We were ready to go as far as was necessary when the situation became tense during the Gulf war, but we did not want to offer such a move and complicate things more unless it was the only solution. In the present circumstances, we try as much as we can to reconcile the brothers.

President Mubarak pointed out in his interview with AL-ITTIHAD that he will meet with U.S. President George Bush in Tokyo, and so will King Husayn. It will be a courtesy meeting for just 30 minutes, and we will not be able to discuss anything, he said. We will just talk about problems in general. The official talks will be held in the United States, when the U.S. Administration has completed its evaluation stage. He added that the Middle East issue will be the first subject on the agenda during these talks, to be followed by the issue of bilateral realtions. Should there be anything concerning our brothers in the Arab world that needs discussion, we will talk about that as well, he declared.

Replying to a question on the U.S. stand toward the recent Palestinian initiative on the establishment of peace in the region, President Mubarak said: I must always cling to hope. If I were to lose hope I would make no effort. Regarding the U.S. and European roles, I am working to consolidate them in the peace process. Besides, peaceloving forces within Israel should support this process. As I always say, peace is a precious thing and I tell Israel now, so that it will understand, that peace means development and the raising of the Israeli's living standards as well as the Arab's. I also tell the Israelis that guaranteeing Israel's security by increasing the area of land they hold at the expense of the land's original owners has become worthless in light of today's advanced technology.

Concerning the international conference, he stated: I believe they will eventually agree on it. He asked: Do Israel and the world want the intifadah [uprising] to continue? Do they imagine that that anyone can halt the intifadah? He stressed that no one can stop it. He noted that he had been asked in the United States how the intifadah could be stopped and that he had replied: It will not stop unless the Palestinians are convinced that there is hope for a settlement, beginning with the convocation of an international conference. Short of that, I believe it would be difficult to stop the intifadah.

Asked whether Washington is still seeking to arrange a meeting between him and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir, Mubarak asserted: Neither Washington nor anyone else can impose a meeting on me if I am not convinced of the value of such a meeting. He said: I showed willingness to go to Israel if this would help achieve a solution. However, the day after my remarks, Shamir came out with a statement saying: No concessions on land. Then a day later he declared: There is no price for President Mubarak's visit to Israel; and on the 3d day he asserted: No negotiations with the PLO. Then he invited me to visit his country. I responded to Shamir's invitation, saying: What will I come for? You are setting conditions prior to my arrival. It was as if he was telling me that this visit would yield no results. This clearly meant that I should not make the trip.

UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan al Nuhayyan was chosen man of the year 1988 by the same international body that chose President Mubarak in 1984. Commenting on this, President Mubarak said: I heard a lot about Shaykh Zayid before I had the chance to meet him and get to know him well. He is a noble person and a man of ethics and values. Everyone attests to his honorable nature, which I greatly respect.

He stated: Shaykh Zayid has the true characteristics of a genuine bedouin, and I personally feel comfortable talking to him. He deserves to be the man of 1988 and man of the year every year. He added: I remember that while we were preparing for the October war we had some financial difficulties. His Highness Shaykh Zayid came to Egypt's support by paying a sum of money, a considerable sum of money then. At that time I was the commander of the Egyptian Air Force, which greatly benefited from this support in preparing for the October war in 1973.

Asked about the Egyptian Government's efforts to retrieve the funds of the capital investment companies held abroad, President Mubarak said the case is in the hands of the judiciary, adding that efforts are being exerted to retrieve these companies' funds abroad, if they have any. He said the government's efforts in this respect are continuing and have not come to a halt.

President Mubarak declared that no Egyptian government official had worked for the capital investment companies. Those who worked for them, used their connections and relations to promote them, and received a lot of money from them, were former ministers and officials. He added: If Egyptians working in the Gulf have fallen victim to and deposited their money in companies that maintain no books or official documents proving the amount of deposits they are holding, how could the government possibly verify the information on the depositors or deposits? He noted that whoever has documents proving he had deposited money in the capital investment companies should present them after the cause is over.

Sudan

Prime Minister on South, Talks in Ethiopia

NC2002192489 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1815 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Khartoum, 20 Feb (MENA)—Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has said Sudan welcomes the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] which comprises Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and the YAR, as well as the grouping of the Arab Maghreb countries. He affirmed his government's principled support for these Arab groupings, which promote relations and provide a wider scope for commercial and economic activity among Arab countries. In statements he made today, Al-Mahdi said that the Sudanese Foreign Ministry is now preparing a paper on the recent Arab groupings and Sudan's position on them.

It should be recalled that Al-Mahdi received Egypt's ambassador in Khartoum. The Egyptian ambassador said after the meeting that he confirmed to Al-Mahdi that the ACC is not directed against anyone and told him that Sudan is welcome to join it.

Regarding the peace steps and process in southern Sudan, Al-Mahdi said in his statement that agreement on peace would lead to an expanded participation in government and to general elections. He noted that the Sudanese Ministerial Council will issue a statement soon on peace in the south. He added that the ministerial committee formed for that purpose has finished drawing up a definite program and the statement on peace in southern Sudan will be issued in light of this program.

Regarding the visit to Ethiopia by a Sudanese Government delegation that includes Interior Minister Mubarak al-Fadil and Angelo Beda, chairman of the Southern Sudanese Council, which began last night, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi said that the visit falls within the framework of the peace efforts and the developing relations between the two countries. He added that the aim of the visit is to continue the talks which began during the interior minister's previous visit to Addis Ababa in January. He said that during that visit Sudan and Ethiopia had signed a definite program, adding that the two countries had carried out the practical step of this agreement, without elaborating on its contents. He said that the Sudanese delegation will discuss the second step of this agreement during the present visit.

Defense Minister Resigns; Replacement Named

EA2102205089 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The chairman and members of the State Council met Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi at the Republican Palace this afternoon. After the meeting Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi said he had discussed with them the latest developments, as well as the acceptance of the resignation of the defense minister, General Retired 'Abd al-Majid Hamid Khalil, and the appointment of Mr Salah al-Din 'Abd al-Salam al-Khalifah as [former minister of cabinet affairs] as defense minister. His excellency said he had explained to the chairman and members of the State Council the circumstances that had prompted him to postpone his departure for Japan as well as that of Mr Idris al-Banna, member of the State Council and leader of the Sudanese delegation. His excellency added that various aspects of the country's internal front and security had also been discussed. He said he would issue a comprehensive statement from the Council of Ministers on the circumstances leading to the resignation of Retired Gen 'Abd al-Majid Hamid Khalil. He added that he had sent a letter to the latter, thanking him for the efforts he had made during his period in office and wishing him success in all his future endeavours.

Minister Gives 'Four Reasons'

LD2102145989 Kuwait KUNA in English 1301 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Khartoum, Feb 21 (KUNA)—Defense Minister Retired General 'Abd al-Majid Hamid Khalil resigned citing the "deterioration of military, political, economic and security situation which weakened his effective movement."

According to most local newspapers which carried news of the resignation Tuesday, the minister, in his letter of resignation to the prime minister, gave four reasons for quitting his office.

Sudan's foreign policy weakened the ability of the country to win military and economic assistance, the minister said recalling that his recent visits to Jordan and Iraq failed to produce tangible results.

Another reason for the resignation, the minister said, was failure of the government to respond to the peace initiative with the Sudanese Peoples' Liberation Movement on peace in south Sudan and the slackness in moving in that direction.

The hegemony of the national Islamic Front (NIF) on the government decision-making and the direction of the decision to the side the front wants has seriously limited the free movement of the government both internally and externally, he was quoted as saying.

The confinement of the decision-making to the two ruling political parties, the Ummah and the NIF, after withdrawal of the Democratic Unionist Party from the government last December, has caused acute internal division, the defense minister argued.

General Khalil is said by [word indistinct] to be staying home refusing to listen to mediation saying his resignation is final unless a radical change is made in the government.

Consultations continued throughout the day yesterday between leaders of the Ummah and the NIF whose newspapers and ministers were very critical of the reconciliatory tone of the statement of the minister when he was reporting to the Constituent Assembly about the fall of Al-Nasir city to the SPLM rebels last month.

According to the press, General Khalil decided to tender his resignation after returning in the last few days from an unannounced visit to a neighbouring country which the press did not name.

When he and the former interior minister were appointed to their offices, the prime minister described General Khalil and Interior Minister Abbas Abu-Shama as independent personalities. Early this month when the premier shook off the DUP ministers and filled their portfolios with party ministers, he dropped the independent interior minister and appointed an Ummah party minister, the former Foreign Trade Minister Mubarak al-Mahdi, to the post.

Two weeks ago an Ummah Party minister, the Minister of State for Finance and Economic Planning Dr al-Tijani al-Tayyib quit his post in protest of the government abuse of public funds. The resignation of the minister was not announced but a new minister, 'Abd al-Rahim Mirghani was sworn in to the office two days ago.

Senior army officers forming the General Defense Council met yesterday noon to discuss the situation in light of the resignation of the minister and its effects on the situation in southern Sudan.

According to unconfirmed reports, the officers supported the arguments of the resigning defense minister on the state of affairs of the army with regards to the on-going civil war in the south.

Other unconfirmed reports also said the Army commander-in-chief, General Fathi Ahmed Ali, also resigned and is staying home fully agreeing with the minister.

Officers Demand 'National Salvation Government'

NC2202131789 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1243 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Khartoum, 22 Feb (MENA)—The commanders of the branches of the Sudanese Armed Forces have presented a memorandum to State Council Chairman Ahmad al-Mirghani and Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi which contains several proposals on how to handle the current situation in the country and the threats facing Sudanese national security.

The proposals—signed by approximately 300 officers—fall under four main topics: the economic deterioration and its underlying causes and the need to reverse it; the security deterioration and the need to adopt political measures to tackle the problem, as well as other measures to support the Armed Forces; the need to achieve balance in foreign policy with a view to serving Sudan's interests; and the need to achieve unity on the domestic front and secure wider popular participation in protecting the domestic front by avoiding conflicts.

A meeting held last night to study the general situation in the country was attended by Lieutenant General Fathi Muhammad 'Ali, commander in chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces, and 150 high-ranking officers.

Today's Sudanese papers say that the memorandum of the commanders of the Sudanese Armed Forces demand a peaceful solution to the problem of the south, the formation of a national salvation government, the security the Armed Forces needs, and the adoption of a balanced foreign policy to realize the country's interests. They also demand that a patriotic line be pursued, that the national identity of the Armed Forces be preserved, and that the parties militia be eliminated.

Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi is scheduled to start a series of contacts with Ahmad al-Mirghani, chairman of the Council of State, and the council members regarding the contents of the memorandum. He will also meet senior officers to discuss this memorandum.

Today's papers also point out that the rebels in the south bambarded the city of Juba in the south the day before yesterday and yesterday morning killing an officer, one soldier, and four civilians.

Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi was scheduled to lead the delegation which will participate in the funeral of the Japanese emperor. However, he has delegated Idris al-Banna, deputy chairman of the State Council, to lead the delegation because of the current developments in the country.

SPLA 'Bright Star' Forces Shell Juba 20 Feb

EA2002163389 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in Arabic 1343 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] This important news item has just arrived: The "Bright Star" forces today, 20 February 1989, heavily shelled Juba. The shelling of the town will continue.

Attack on Juba Continues

EA2101184080 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Excerpt] SPLA forces of "Bright Star" campaign, yesterday, 20th February 1989, carried out a heavy artillery bombardment of Juba town. This is the first time since the war started that Juba has come under artillery bombardment. The bombardment started at 11 hours [0900 GMT] and caused massive damage as clouds of smoke hanged over Juba. Juba has again been subjected to artillery bombardment today and this continued.

A military spokesman of the SPLA denied and dismissed as untrue and absurd the claims of the governor of Equatoria, Mr Morris Lawiya, carried yesterday over

Radio Juba, that the SPLA intended to bomb civilian targets. The SPLA will always respect civilians and indeed took up arms to fight for the people. The spokesman said the governor's statement seems to suggest that SPLA bombs look for only children and pregnant women. This is malicious and in bad taste. Who did the governor visit in the military hospital yesterday? The soldiers who were wounded in the bombardment.

The spokesman affirmed that all the targets of yesterday's SPLA bombardment in Juba were military targets and that this included the main Army garrison HQ, the armored unit HQ, the officers' mess, the training center, the storage facilities and the airport. The spokesman said the movement regretted any loss of life among any civilians who might have been caught up in cross fire, as is always inevitable in military operations.

In this connection, the SPLA warns civilians to move away from military targets as the bombardment will be intensified and the siege on Juba tightened from all directions. Civilians are encouraged to move behind SPLA lines of Infijar at Jabal Lado or behind Shakkush lines in the area of Rejaf west or behind Infijar lines in the area of Jabal Kujur, or behind "Bright Star" campaign lines east of the river.

In a related development, the "Bright Star" campaign commander expressed appreciation and admiration for the revolutionary role played by SPLA members within the Yarmuk convoy in the defeat of the convoy. Without the contribution of these comrades working from within the enemy ranks it might have not been possible to defeat the Yarmuk. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Egypt's Mubarak Arrives for 2-Day Visit

JN2102180389 Manama WAKH in English 1640 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 21 (GNA)—Egyptian President Husni Mubarak arrived today for a two-day visit to the United Arab Emirates.

He was met at the airport by UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan and other top officials.

During the visit, President Mubarak will hold talks with Shaykh Zayid on the latest developments in the Gulf, Arab and international arenas and means of developing bilateral relations.

Egypt's Al-Baz on Visit

JN2102192089 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1830 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 21 Feb (WAKH)—Dr Usamah al-Baz, under secretary of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry and head of the Egyptian president's office, has paid tribute to the Egyptian-UAE relations and described them as excellent.

In a statement upon the arrival of Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Abu Dhabi today, Dr al-Baz said that the bilateral relations are developing in all spheres and that these relations are being bolstered by the special relationship between President Mubarak and His Highness Shaykh Zayid.

Al-Baz added that the talks that will be held between the two leaders President Mubarak and UAE President His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan will focus on the contacts recently held by Egypt on the international Middle East peace conference and the Palestine question.

The Egyptian official said that President Mubarak will brief His Highness Shaykh Zayid on what transpired in Cairo yesterday during his meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and on the meeting that will be held in Cairo between Shevardnadze and PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

In his statement, Dr al-Baz referred to the importance of the coordinated Arab stand and of Jordanian-Palestinian coordination.

Al-Baz added that the Egyptian president will discuss during his talks with His Highness Shaykh Zayid the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council grouping Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and the YAR. He said that the two leaders will also discuss the constant bilateral coordination on the Arab and Islamic summits.

Mubarak Confers With President

NC2202094089 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Official talks between President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan began in the presidential office in the Al-Ra's al-Akhdar area in Abu Dhabi this morning. The talks began with a closed meeting between the two leaders.

Earlier this morning President Mubarak received Shaykh Hamdan ibn Muhammad Al Nuhayyan, UAE Deputy Prime Minister, at his place of residence in the guest palace. They reviewed the strong fraternal ties between the two countries and ways to further strengthen them.

President Mubarak and Shaykh Hamad also discussed the general situation in the Arab arena, particularly developments in the Palestinian issue, efforts to hold the international peace conference, the situation in Lebanon, and a number of other issues which concern both countries.

Shaykh Hamdan later accompanied President Mubarak to the presidential office in Al-Ra's al-Akhdar, where official talks between the two Arab leaders began.

Butrus Ghali Views Talks

NC2202103289 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] In a statement to a Cairo radio correspondent in Abu Dhabi, Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, said talks between President Husni Mubarak and UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan were very productive and helped strengthen relations between the two brotherly countries and peoples.

He added that the two leaders' views were identical on most significant regional and international issues, particularly the Palestinian issue. The leaders underlined the need to support the Palestinian people's struggle to restore their right to self-determination.

Reportage on Visit of Soviet Economic Delegation

Cooperation Accord Discussed

JN1602170989 Manama WAKH in English 1600 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb. 16 (GNA)—Undersecretary of the UAE Economy and Trade Ministry 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Mubarak today discussed cooperation with a Soviet trade delegation. He told the delegation, which arrived last night, the UAE was keen to develop trade relations with the Soviet Union. Talks focused on a proposed economic, trade and technical cooperation accord and a joint team was set up to follow the issue.

Economy Minister on Talks

JN1802194889 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1730 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Dubayy, 18 Feb (WAKH)—A session of talks was held today in Dubayy between the UAE delegation, headed by Minister of Economy and Trade Sayf al-Jarwan, and the Soviet delegation, headed by Namik

Yakubov, chief of the Economic Cooperation with the Middle East Department in the USSR State Committee for Foreign Trade Relations, which is currently visiting the UAE.

Al-Jarwan stated that during the meeting, the two sides discussed economic relations between the two countries in general and reviewed the signing of an economic, trade, technical, and investment agreement, whose clauses were discussed during a meeting between officials from both countries in Abu Dhabi last Thursday. He pointed out that the viewpoints of the two sides were in agreement during today's meeting, which complemented the previous one.

He said that the agreement deals with trade exchange, joint investment, technical aspects, and making use of the expertise available in both countries, as well as affirming both countries' desire to develop economic relations.

Al-Jarwan added: The objective of this agreement is to raise economic and trade relations between the two countries to the level of the distinguished political relations between the Soviet Union and the UAE on the one hand, and between Arab states and the Soviet Union on the other. Also, it will regulate relations between the two countries and is considered a legal framework for trade exchange with the aim of improving and activating it.

Al-Jarwan added: The agreement concentrates on the fact that there are many fields that can be improved and developed, such as organizing and holding trade fairs, advertising products in both countries, and marketing them so that they will become known to citizens and residents, as well as exchanging visits and establishing trade centers.

The UAE trade and economy minister explained that the agreement will be signed in the Soviet Union, according to their wish, after both countries have approved its clauses. He pointed out that although the trade balance between the two countries favors the Soviet Union, it is still meager and the agreement will contribute toward bolstering it to reach an economic balance between the two countries.

The UAE economy and trade minister said that he had presented to the Soviet delegation a full perception of the facilities provided by the UAE to importers and foreign commodities imports to the state. He explained that the UAE applies the principle of a free economy and exempts the requirements of agriculture, industry, medical appliances, and foodstuffs from tarrifs. He also explained that tarrifs on other commodities do not exceed 4 percent and that there are facilities provided to companies working in the state in trade, contracting, construction, and other activities.

Al-Jarwan added that he had provided the Soviet delegation with a special list of national commodities that are exported to other countries and can be exported to the Soviet Union.

Businessmen Meet With Delegation

JN1802204789 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1930 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Officials at the UAE Union of Chambers of Trade, Industry, and Agriculture, led by head of the Union, Hamad Abu Shihab, today held a meeting with the Soviet delegation, led by Namik Yakubov, chief of the Economic Cooperation with the Middle East Department in the USSR State Committee for Foreign Trade Relations, which is currently visiting the country.

During the meeting, Abu Shihab talked about trade relations between the two countries. He pointed out that UAE imports from the Soviet Union totalled $717,000 in 1985, increasing by 65 percent in 1986 to reach $1,187,000 and by 114 percent in 1987 to reach $2,546,000.

On his part, the Soviet official said that his visit to the UAE aims first to expand trade and economic exchange and cooperation between the two countries, pointing out that his country's total volume of trade exchange is around $175 billion.

Delegation Leaves

JN1902205589 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1830 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 19 Feb (WAKH)—A memorandum of understanding pertaining to the economic, trade, technical, and investment agreement between the UAE and the Soviet Union was signed here today. It was signed for the UAE side by 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Mubarak, Ministry of Economy and Trade under secretary; and for the Soviet side by Namik Yakubov, chief of the Economic Cooperation with the Middle East Department in the USSR State Committee for Foreign Trade Relations.

Al-Mubarak said that the two sides agreed to study the provisions of the agreement in order to reach a final agreement that will cover all the required points. The Soviet economic delegation left Abu Dhabi after a 4-day visit to the UAE as part of its tour of a number of countries in the region.

Officials Depart for Emperor Hirohito's Funeral

JN2002204489 Manama WAKH in Arabic 2000 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 20 Feb (WAKH)—Staff Brigadier General Shaykh Muhammad ibn Zayid, commander of the UAE Air Force and Air Defense, accompanied by Rashid 'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, left Abu Dhabi tonight on their way to Japan to participate in the funeral of the late Emperor Hirohito. The delegation will offer condolences to Japanese Emperor Akihito in the name of His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, UAE president, and on behalf of the UAE Government.

'Aziz Explains Nature, Aims of Arab Council

JN2102184689 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has stressed that the launching of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] conforms with the Arab peoples' inclination toward unity and embodies the deep relations and bonds among the founding members. This came in a news conference he held today at the Ministry of Information and Culture and attended by Information and Culture Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim, heads of media and press departments, and correspondents of INA, broadcast and television stations, and local newspapers and magazines. He said that the purpose behind establishing the ACC is to create a model for serious and true cooperative action that reinforces the foundations and goals of the Arab League and boosts the solidarity of its member states.

'Aziz announced at his news conference that he will soon visit Bahrain and Morocco, with messages from President Saddam Husayn to His Highness Shaykh 'Isa ibn Salman Al Khalifah, amir of Bahrain, in his capacity as the chairman of the current GCC session, and His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco, in his capacity as the chairman of the current session of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU].

He said that he will inform Shaykh 'Isa and King Hassan II of the ACC agreement and stress the desire of the ACC to cooperate and coordinate with the GCC and the AMU.

The foreign minister emphasized that the establishment of the ACC and the similar Arab groupings prevented the enemies of the Arab nation from realizing their aims and expansionist ambitions, and added to the Arab strength and weight.

He stressed that the ACC members are determined to seriously and effectively implement this agreement in a gradual, dynamic, and well-considered manner.

The ACC, he said, is distinguished from similar regional councils by the fact that its resolutions are adopted by a majority vote and are binding to all member states. This gives the council the power to implement these resolutions, he said.

More on 'Aziz News Conference

JN2202103489 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1435 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Feb (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has stressed that the launching of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] conforms with the Arab peoples' inclination toward unity and embodies the deep relations and bonds among the founding members. This came in a news conference he held today at the Ministry of Information and Culture and attended by Information and Culture Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim, heads of media and press departments, INA correspondents, radio and television stations, and local newspapers and magazines. He said that the purpose behind establishing the ACC is to create a model for a serious and true cooperative action that reinforces the foundations and goals of the Arab League and boosts the solidarity of its member states.

The foreign minister emphasized that the establishment of the ACC and similar Arab groups prevented the enemies of the Arab nation from realizing their aims and expansionist ambitions, and added to Arab strength and weight. He stressed that the ACC members are determined to seriously and effectively implement this agreement in a gradual, dynamic, and carefully-studied manner. The ACC is distinguished from similar regional councils by the fact that its resolutions are adopted by a majority vote and are binding to all member states. This gives the council the power to implement these resolutions.

Tariq 'Aziz stressed that the establishment of the ACC responds to the Arab nation's inclination toward unity and to the approach of establishing economic infrastructures among the Arab states. He added that the four Arab states that signed the ACC agreement enjoy a high degree of similar circumstances and resources that provided an actual base for the establishment of the ACC. He said that the ACC possesses a realistic ability for growth and development that constitutes an influential pan-Arab economic grouping in harmony with a theory of President Saddam Husayn to the effect that the unity between two Arab countries gives them much more strength.

At his news conference, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister said that the prevailing trend in the contemporary world is directed toward establishing economic groupings and blocs to secure the interests of the member states and achieve further development and progress. He added that the Arab states deemed it in its interest to establish a bloc or a framework for economic coordination among them and then to reach the stage of integration. He said that they have made large strides in this regard, and they will reach the advanced stage in 1992.

He stressed that emphasis was made on cooperation, coordination and integration among the four Arab states in the economic field. However, he added, the agreement also includes solidarity among the four states. He said that the agreement has a political content, but it does not include the structures of coordinating political and diplomatic action.

Tariq 'Aziz said that the establishment of the ACC was the result of continuous work that lasted several years, and that it covers the economic fields and other fields that achieved a high level of understanding, namely the political field during the years of the Iranian aggression. He added that the ACC agreement dealt with the security issue, and that the introduction of this agreement expressed the importance of the unity of the requirements and conditions of pan-Arab security. He stressed that there is political understanding and mutual support among the four Arab states in case they are exposed to an agreession such as the Iranian aggression against Iraq. He affirmed that the stage of ambitions in the Arab world has gone forever, and that the Arab situation is no longer weak, loose, or fragmented to tempt those who covet the Arab land or carry out an aggression against this or that part of the Arab world.

Tariq 'Aziz said that the agreement to establish the ACC was a serious one and was the result of the four sides' practical and deep conviction. However, he said, its implementation will take some time. He added that the implementation will be serious and in a gradual, effective, and dynamic manner. He stressed that the principle of a unanimous vote regarding the acceptance of new members is necessary and agreed upon by the four sides. He said that this is not a condition that was set by any of the four sides. He described this as an essential development that distinguishes the ACC from the Arab League or the similar regional and international councils. He said that the absence of this rule from the action of the Arab League has weakened the league and its resolutions that are adopted by a majority vote that are binding only to those who vote in favor of these resolutions.

80 Sick, Handicapped POW's Return From Tehran

JN2102160889 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1525 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Feb (INA)—Eighty sick and handicapped Iraqi POW's returned here this morning. Iran had been procrastinating over their release since 17 November. An emotional reception took place at Saddam International Airport, with the POW's praying for the long life of President Saddam Husayn and making victory signs.

The POW's were received by members of the permanent committee for war victims and a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] in Baghdad. On board the plane carrying the POW's was an ICRC mission.

It is to be noted that Iraq, upon President Saddam Husayn's orders, unilaterally returned 255 Iranian POW's to Iran last month. Earlier, Iraq and Iran agreed through the ICRC to exchange 1158 Iraqi and 411 Iranian POW's, but Iran halted this process on 17 November under weak excuses.

Military Commission Meeting With Iran Postponed

JN2102163289 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1555 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Feb (INA)—A spokesman for the international military observers team has announced that contacts are currently under way to fix a new date for the meeting of the mixed Iraq-Iran military commission. In a press release here today, the spokesman said that the meeting, scheduled to be held Wednesday on the Iraqi-Iranian border, had been postponed.

The comission was set up at the end of January upon a proposal by the UN secretary general. Iraq and Iran agreed to the proposal during the tour of Jan Eliasson, representative of the UN secretary general, on 27 January.

The international observers team, which supervises the cease-fire between Iraq and Iran, had arranged for the meeting—due to be held Wednesday—to take place at a site along the road between the cities of Khanaqin and Qasr-e Shirin, in an area between Iraqi and Iranian positions.

The activities of the commission, which would have comprised Iraqi and Iranian military representatives, are supervised by General Slavko Jovic, commander of the international observers team.

The commission is entrusted to boost the cease-fire in the Iraq-Iran war, which came into force on 20 August.

UN Observers Group Commander Leaves for Tehran

JN2202101189 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0930 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Feb (INA)—SFRY General Slavko Jovic, commander of the UN Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group, left Baghdad today for Tehran.

He was seen off by his representative to the Iraqi side and the UN representative in Baghdad.

Vice President Leaves for Hirohito Funeral

JN2202070589 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0620 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Feb (INA)—Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf, RCC member and vice president, left for Tokyo last night at the head of a delegation to attend the funeral of the late Japanese Emperor Hirohito.

In a predeparture statement, the vice president said that during the visit, he will hold talks with Japanese officials on promoting relations between the two countries, particularly in the economic field. He added that he will also meet with a number of heads of delegations participating in the funeral to discuss with them means of promoting Iraq's relations with their states.

The delegation accompanying Taha Muhyi al-Din Ma'ruf includes the Foreign Ministry under secretary and a number of officials.

Shevardnadze, Arens Plan To Continue Contacts

TA2202123589 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Report by political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami in Cairo on "this morning's meeting" between Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze—live]

[Text] Ministers Moshe Arens and Eduard Shevardnadze spoke for 2 hours and 45 minutes at the residence of the Soviet ambassador in Cairo. At the end of the meeting, Shevardnadze, all smiles, said he had thanked Minister Arens for his invitation to visit Tel Aviv, but that the visit cannot take place for understandable reasons. We decided to meet in Cairo as both Israel and the USSR maintain good relations with Egypt, Shevardnadze said, adding: We discussed the various aspects of the Middle East settlement; I cannot say we reached a solution on all the aspects, but we did not expect to. We noted, Shevardnadze said, that major changes have taken place in the world, especially in the Middle East, and that we should aspire to make progress through a joint effort. We agreed, Shevardnadze added, to continue the contacts at the foreign ministers level and very soon—within the coming days—at the experts level.

Minister Moshe Arens summed up the meeting by saying as follows: We came here because if Muhammad does not come to the mountain, the mountain comes to Muhammad. The dialogue between Israel and the Soviet Union, Arens said, experienced a long dry spell, and we now find out that there are a lot of issues to discuss. Arens added: We must expand the circle of dialogue; we must try to create a basis for understanding and perhaps even agreement. We are now laying the foundations for understanding between our two countries. This is important for Israel and, I very much hope, also for the Soviet Union and for progress toward peace in the Middle East.

Minister Shevardnadze noted that a discussion of the international conference issue is not a simple matter. Shevardnadze added: Even if Arens and I are agreed on this today, it still does not mean that this conference will be held, because we also must take into account the positions of the Arab countries, the UN Security Council members, and the European countries that are greatly interested in the process. Therefore, the international conference issue should be carefully discussed.

Comment After Meeting

TA2202132189 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Natan Gutman report from Cairo following this morning's meeting between Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze—live]

[Excerpts] We have just returned from the meeting between Minister Arens and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. The meeting lasted about 2 hours and 45 minutes, although it was scheduled to last only 90 minutes. Participating in the meeting on the Soviet side were Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, his adviser Stepanov, and Foreign Ministry official Tarasov. Participating on behalf of Israel were Foreign Minister Arens, his deputy Netanyahu, and Yesha'yahu 'Anug, Foreign Ministry assistant director general.

Upon emerging from the talks, the Soviet foreign minister defined the meeting as constructive and cooperative [last word in English], and as having been conducted in a good atmosphere that enabled an open, sincere, and true dialogue. We did not find a solution for all problems, but it was naive to expect this, Shevardnadze said. A Soviet-Israeli meeting will soon be held between experts who are slated to engage in an in-depth discussion of the issues covered by the two foreign ministers. Also, the two foreign ministers will meet again.

The worst thing is not to hold a dialogue at all, and we have now passed this stage, Shevardnadze said. Minister Arens referred to the circumstances behind holding the meeting: I told Shevardnadze that if Muhammad will not come to the mountain, the mountain will come to Muhammad. Summing up the meeting, Arens said: I believe the conclusion is that we should meet again, expand our ties, and create a basis for understanding. I believe we are on the way to understanding.

In reply to questions by the numerous journalists who awaited the end of the meeting, Shevardnadze said that without Israel's good will, the peace process will not progress. Also, according to Shevardnadze, a process without the participation of the USSR is impossible. In conclusion, Shevardnadze said, the conflict in the Middle East must be resolved, as there is no other choice. [passage omitted]

The Soviet foreign minister was very determined in his remarks. He clearly expressed the desire of the Soviet Union to be incorporated in the political process in the Middle East. Minister Shevardnadze said: A political solution, a peaceful solution, is impossible without the Soviet Union; we understand this, and this is why the continuing dialogue that we have already started is important. [passage omitted]

Incidentally, Foreign Minister Moshe Arens spoke less than Shevardnadze to journalists. It seems that most attention focused on Minister Shevardnadze. A very important point that should be stressed about the remarks made by the two ministers upon emerging from the meeting was that the PLO was not mentioned. In all of the remarks, even when asked, the PLO was not mentioned. As for conditions, the Soviet foreign minister stressed Israel's good will and Soviet participation, but did not at all mention the PLO. It is too early to tell whether this constitutes a change in Soviet positions; still, this is what was said after the meeting. The meeting lasted much longer than expected: while scheduled for 90 minutes, it finally lasted 2 hours and 45 minutes—a very long meeting, which must have been extensive if not constructive.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1200 GMT on 22 February adds that "At the beginning of the news conference held after the meeting, Minister Arens said that the success of the meeting with his counterpart, Shevardnadze, should be measured by its length. Extensive discussion was held on topics that had not been discussed in the past because of the lack of understanding between the two countries."]

Mubarak: Time 'Inappropriate' for Meeting Shamir

TA2202061289 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 22 Feb 89 pp 1, 12

[Report by diplomatic correspondent Menahem Shalev]

[Excerpt] Cairo—Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid said yesterday that his talks with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens had been "very fruitful." He also accepted Arens' invitation to visit Israel in the near future.

Meeting at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry last night, the two discussed the international conference, superpower auspices for peace talks and direct negotiations, as well as the matter of Palestinian representation.

Arens announced after the meeting that Foreign Ministry Director-General Reuven Merhav will also visit Cairo in the next few days to continue talks with Egyptian officials.

The JERUSALEM POST has learned, however, that Arens was less successful in persuading Egyptian President Husni Mubarak to meet Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir in the near future. Mubarak indicated to Arens that the time is inappropriate for such a meeting, and well-placed sources said the two would not meet for "some time to come." [passage omitted]

Egyptian Envoy on New Soviet Mideast Moves

JN1902162689 Jerusalem in Arabic to the Arab World 1030 GMT 19 Feb 89

[From the "Midday Events" program]

[Excerpt] Egyptian Ambassador Muhammad Basyuni has expressed optimism over the Soviet foreign minister's tour of the region and the declaration of establishing the Arab Cooperation Council. Our correspondent Shafiq Mansur reports:

[Begin recording] [Mansur] Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni has expressed optimism that Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's visit to a number of Middle East countries and his [upcoming] meeting in Cairo with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens point to a new Soviet political move to enhance the peace process in the region.

[Basyuni] No doubt, the Soviet move heralds glad tidings. It is recalled that the Soviets are interested in resolving regional problems. This is because stability in all regions will bring economic stability. The big powers seek to achieve settlements in disputed regions so economic stability and growth can be realized, God willing. The Middle East conflict is considered one of the most important current disputes. We also hope that a just and quick solution to this problem will be found so the peoples in this region will devote their efforts to development and to the exploitation of the huge capabilities present in this region. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Sale of Hotel Paves Way for Tabah Solution

TA2102200289 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] A compensation arrangement for the Tabah Aviya Sonesta Hotel was reached in Cairo today. The agreement stipulates that the hotel owners will be paid $40 million, including $37 million in cash and $3 million from future profits.

The agreement was reached between the hotel owners, Eli Paposhado and his attorney Shraga Biran, and Egyptian Tourism Minister Fu'ad Sultan.

The hotel was sold to the Egyptian Tourism Ministry. When it is handed over to the new owners on 15 March, Egypt will transfer the right of possession to Paposhado's Red Sea Hotels company, which will manage the hotel for 20 years.

The agreement achieved today has paved the way for handing the Tabah area over to Egypt no later than mid-March. The final agreement regarding the arrangements in Tabah will be signed at the Aviya Sonesta early next week.

Shamir Departs for France, Views Cairo Talks

TA2102054989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Shlomo Raz at Ben-Gurion Airport and moderator Shalom Qital in the studio, before Shamir's departure for a 4-day visit to France on 21 February—live]

[Text] [Raz] Mr Prime Minister, what is the purpose of your current trip to Paris?

[Shamir] I am going at the invitation of the French premier. I will hold meetings and talks with France's leaders, the foremost of whom is President Francois Mitterrand. I will also meet with the prime minister, the foreign minister, and others.

[Raz] Mr Prime Minister, there have been rumors that President Mitterrand may meet with 'Arafat. Will you broach the subject during your meeting?

[Shamir] Clearly, when we discuss the Middle East situation there is no doubt that the matter of French-PLO ties and meetings between French personages and PLO leaders—past and possibly future, too—will be raised.

[Raz] It seems that France may assume a role, possibly even a central role, in the political contacts currently under way.

[Shamir] France has been trying to show great interest in Middle East events and its views are important to us. I also attribute great significance to the opinions of President Mitterrand, who has great influence in Europe and the Western world in general. I will attempt to bring our positions as close as possible, if I can.

[Raz] Mr Prime Minister, several people, including yourself, have commented on political initiatives and moves. Do you think that in the aftermath of this visit we will learn something new?

[Shamir] In the current phase of contacts that we are holding and will continue to hold in various places throughout the world regarding ways that could lead to peace in our region, that is possible.

[Qital] Shlomo, I do not know whether the prime minister can hear us.

[Raz] No, he cannot.

[Qital] In that case, I would be grateful if you asked him about his reaction to reports from Cairo on the talks Moshe Arens has already held, and in anticipation of his upcoming meeting with the Soviet foreign minister.

[Raz] Sir, one inevitable question, naturally, has to do with the contacts currently under way between the foreign minister in Cairo, the capital of Egypt, and his future meeting with the Soviet foreign minister.

[Shamir] No doubt our foreign minister is holding highly significant talks in Egypt. He has already met once with the Egyptian president. It was the first meeting between Israeli and Egyptian representatives in a long while. I hope it will herald the beginning of a new era characterized by closer and more frequent ties. He is also scheduled to meet tomorrow with the Soviet foreign minister. This will be his second meeting with the Soviet foreign minister after the earlier one a short time ago in Paris. I hope that meeting will mark a new stage in rapprochement with the Soviet Union.

[Raz] There were reports yesterday that the Soviet Union believes that by the end of this year, or early next year at the latest, an international conference will be convoked.

[Shamir] These days it is only natural for plenty of rumors and assessments to fly about, yet one should be patient and wait for the developments in the near future.

[Raz] Thank you very much, sir, and good luck on your journey.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE Interview

PM2202112289 Paris LE FIGARO MAGAZINE in French 18 Feb 89 pp 92-94

[Interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by Robert Lacontre in Jerusalem—date not given]

[Text] LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: What is the meaning of the surprise U.S. decision to "reactivate" 'Arafat? Who is behind this suddenly pro-Palestinian U.S. policy?

Yitzhaq Shamir: It is a blow to the cause of peace. The Americans will soon realize their mistake. It is not a decision by the new administration because it was made before George Bush's investiture, and it was not a decision made by Reagan on the eve of his departure. It is the result of pressure from those who believe that it is necessary to negotiate with the PLO to achieve a solution.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: Let us say the Palestinian lobby....

Yitzhaq Shamir: I do not know whether there is really a Palestinian lobby. What I do know is that the conflict will be fiercer if we talk with 'Arafat.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: Why do you think that Yasir 'Arafat waited until 1988 before talking about a government in exile?

Yitzhaq Shamir: Because he now thinks that this political means is a better weapon than confrontation. But the aim is still the same—to destroy Israel.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: How will the other Palestinian leaders react—Habash, Hawatimah, and Jibril?

Yitzhaq Shamir: 'Arafat has become fashionable again. He may be forgotten again tomorrow. The other leaders are pursuing the same objective, and the Arab world does not oppose it.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: So, on the one hand 'Arafat is playing the role of a reasonable politician, and, on the other hand, he is maintaining the uprising in the occupied territories. Did he say that he condemned terrorism or that he renounced terrorism?

Yitzhaq Shamir: He did not condemn terrorism. He said that he renounced it for the time being. That is a tactical decision. If he does not obtain any results, he will start planting bombs again.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: What will the more extremist leaders do?

Yitzhaq Shamir: There is no difference between them and 'Arafat. They all belong to the PLO. I repeat that they will change tactics tomorrow, if necessary.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: What role is Abu Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] playing?

Yitzhaq Shamir: He is certainly an extremist, but he does not have an important role.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: Do you not think that Israeli opinion is currently divided on the troubles in the occupied territories?

Yitzhaq Shamir: There are internal divisions in all democracies. That is completely normal. Israel has 40 years of democratic experience. We have learned to combat all external dangers.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: Is the intifadah, the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories, spontaneous or directed from outside?

Yitzhaq Shamir: It is a mixture. It is being whipped up by intellectuals on the spot and also by propaganda from outside. You just have to listen to broadcasts by Monte Carlo radio, Damascus radio, and Baghdad radio to realize that. We also hear European voices. That encourages the agitation.

What Is Socialism?

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: Do you not also think that Israeli socialist leaders are helping to undermine Israel's position?

Yitzhaq Shamir: You know, socialism is very difficult to define clearly. What is socialism? What does that mean?

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: It means that some socialists want to negotiate with the PLO.

Yitzhaq Shamir: It is not the Socialist leaders who have that attitude, but, I would say, it is some individuals—individuals who are prepared to make concessions to the Arabs. To talk like the Americans, I would call them liberals.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: So, you are maintaining the attitude you have always had: no negotiations with the PLO?

Yitzhaq Shamir: Yes. Above all, we must not have such negotiations. The establishment of a Palestinian state would be the beginning of the end for us. Consequently, we will never accept the creation of such a state. Moreover, the PLO is not interested in this question. What the Palestinian leaders want is our destruction. To achieve that, they are now accepting all kinds of solutions—notably a Palestinian state in just part of Palestine to create a base from which to pursue their final objective. The PLO has support from numerous states for achieving its ends. The Israeli people must, therefore, defend themselves.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: But surely it is necessary to settle the problem of a land for the Palestinians?

Yitzhaq Shamir: The PLO leaders state that there are 4 million Palestinians. How could Israel accept all those people without bursting? Surely all those Palestinians, all those Palestinian Arabs have Jordanian territory on which to settle? Of course, we must find a solution for all those who remain in our country. We must negotiate with the Palestinians living in our country. That is the whole problem.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: At all events, after the death of King Husayn, Jordan is likely to break up.

Yitzhaq Shamir: That is not for us to discuss. Geographically, Jordan is part of Palestine and, as regards population, the majority of Jordanians are Palestinians.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: How do you explain the fact that it was the Egyptians who first said that you were responsible for the crash of the American Boeing plane in Britain?

Yitzhaq Shamir: You know that is ridiculous. There may have been an Egyptian who said that. To be more precise, it was a newspaper, but if you read the Egyptian press you will find many exaggerations that are very hostile to Israel.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: A word about the Jewish colonies in the occupied territories. Do you not think that they are a challenge?

Yitzhaq Shamir: First, they are not colonies, and it is you who say that they are occupied territories. In fact, throughout our history we have built villages. Those villages are in the area called the "land of Israel" in the Bible. [Shamir ends]

Yitzhaq Shamir, a skilled politician and inflexible nationalist who is fighting for Israel's survival, a man who fought fiercely underground with Irgun and the Stern group against the British at the time of the mandate, continued:

[Shamir continues] There are only two ways of settling a conflict: Either by force, by violent confrontation, or by negotiation. We have always been in favor of negotiation. It was the Arabs who refused. Even now, we are prepared to negotiate with the Palestinians on the West Bank and in Gaza, but not with the PLO.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: You are going to open an Israeli consulate in Moscow. Is this the first step toward the restoration of diplomatic relations with the USSR?

Yitzhaq Shamir: There is, in fact, a improvement in relations between the Soviet Union and Israel. We want to have friendly contacts with that power. In addition, we have a special interest as regards the USSR. There is a big Jewish population living there. We want to have fruitful contacts with those people. [Shamir ends]

Shamir will make an official visit to France at the beginning of the week. However, the situation between our two countries is rather tense. Our foreign minister met with Yasir 'Arafat. So did his Spanish and Greek counterparts. There is even talk of a meeting in Egypt in the spring between the French president and the PLO chairman. Shamir does not really like the Europeans' current tendency to do all they can to "legalize" the man he regards as a terrorist. The Israeli prime minister answered my question with all the necessary diplomacy.

Is France Pro-Palestinian?

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: Do you have the impression that France is leaning more toward the Palestinians?

Yitzhaq Shamir: It is not my role to judge France's policy. I am very happy to have the opportunity of meeting your country's leaders and especially Mr Mitterrand. That will give me the opportunity to our explain our position. In addition, I will be able to hear and listen to France's official voice. It is very important to be able to listen. We Israelis regard France as a friendly country. But it is natural for there to be some differences of opinion among friends. It is necessary to talk. We must make an effort to win people over. We are open to any dialogue.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: One last question, prime minister. How do you view Israel in 50 years' time?

Yitzhaq Shamir: I would like to think that in 50 years time we will be a country of 10 million inhabitants—a prosperous and stable country, but, above all, a country at peace.

LE FIGARO MAGAZINE: Are you optimistic?

Yitzhaq Shamir: I am very optimistic. A man of experience has to be optimistic. There is a great deal of evidence that optimism is not an empty word in my case.

Arens Briefs Cabinet on Meeting With Thatcher

TA2002090489 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 20 Feb 89 p 1

[Report from Jerusalem by the political correspondent]

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens told the cabinet yesterday that his impression from his visit to Britain was that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher takes a firm stand against terrorism because of the manifestations of terrorism in Ireland.

At the same time, he added, Thatcher believes that all the alternatives must be considered, and she hopes that an authentic Palestinian representation with whom it will be possible to conduct negotiations will be found.

Referring to the upcoming meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, Arens said that he regards the very fact of the meeting as an achievement, because it sets a precedent in the political arena. It proves that the Soviet Union is increasing its involvement in the region, and not only on the Arabs' side.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir summed up the political debate in the cabinet, saying that the government's basic guidelines must be pursued. He sees the discussion of a political plan before every planned meeting with a statesman as unfeasible. He expressed reservations about the courtship of PLO members, saying it could be harmful. Every loophole in the political area should be exploited, he added. [passage omitted]

Herzog Departs for Tokyo for Hirohito's Funeral

TA2002112889 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] President Hayim Herzog left this morning for Geneva aboard an El Al plane en route to Tokyo. There he will represent Israel at the funeral of Japanese Emperor Hirohito. The president directly boarded the plane, no ceremony was held at the airport. The official ceremony bidding farewell to the president took place yesterday at the presidential residence in Jerusalem.

Rabin Reiterates Objection to Talks With PLO

TA1702142989 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 17 Feb 89 pp 1, 4

[Report by Pe'erli Shahar and ITIM]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Addressing a meeting of Labor Party activists yesterday, Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said: "I object to any negotiations whatsoever with the PLO." He reiterated his position that there can be no negotiations as long as the intifadah [uprising] has not been quelled. "We should not give them the feeling that they forced us to enter negotiations," he said.

In Rabin's opinion, negotiations with the PLO are tantamount to suicide. He quoted Abba Eban as saying that "there is no international pledge compelling Israel to conduct a national policy of suicide." He rejected the possibility of establishing a Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan, saying "this cannot be a solution because such a state would not be able to solve the problem." Rabin concluded his remarks by saying: "Any negotiations with the PLO would only culminate in a withdrawal from all the territories, a total withdrawal, as soon as the Palestinians set out to fulfill their right of return. If Israel wants to live, it should reject any proposal to conduct such negotiations."

Knesset Passes Bill Limiting Local Elections

TA2102113989 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The Knesset has passed a bill forbidding former prisoners from standing for the office of mayor or counselor for a period of 6 years after their release from prison. Attorney General Yosef Harish says he is examining possible changes in the law that will forbid former security inmates from standing for local elections.

It turns out that a number of Arab candidates in next week's local elections had been released when security prisoners were freed several years ago in exchange for the release of captured Israeli soldiers.

Rabin: 'Uprising' Leaders Reproach PLO Leaders

TA2002081989 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 20 Feb 89 p 10

[Report by Asher Wallfish]

[Excerpt] Defence Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said yesterday that the leaders of the intifadah [uprising] in the territories have lately been reproaching the PLO leadership abroad for not making the substantive political progress it had promised, while putting the onus on the Palestinians under occupation to force Israel's hand.

Rabin told the cabinet, at its weekly session yesterday, that the leaders of the intifadah had criticized PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat for not achieving anything more tangible than meetings with a few foreign ministers. He said that the population, smarting under economic and other difficulties, had been misled by 'Arafat into believing he would bring their plight to an end more rapidly.

He said that the PLO leadership abroad, for its part, was trying to persuade the Palestinians under occupation that if they stepped up their violence and protests a few more notches, they could subject Israel to irresistible pressure.

The minister, who presented his routine survey of security developments over the past week, said the defence establishment was handling operations in the territories precisely as the inner cabinet laid down some weeks ago. It did not need to seek harsher measures since the situation did not require them.

Rabin said the intifadah could not be considered a military threat to Israel in any sense. It was rather an effort to wear down Israel's political resolve by resort to violence. [passage omitted]

Shamir's Office Links Murder to Al-Husayni Talks

TA1902084089 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 19 Feb 89 pp 1, 8

[Report by political correspondents Mikhal Yudelman and Dan Petreanu]

[Text] The stabbing murder of Shlomi Kohen yesterday in the Old City was a result of talks between politicians and Faysal al-Husayni, said sources in the Prime Minister's Office.

The sources dismissed, however, the possibility that the talks with Al-Husayni and their approval by Labour's Vice Premier Shim'on Peres might lead to a coalition crisis.

Meanwhile, senior government circles revealed that they feared for Al-Husayni's safety, following the series of talks he held with MKs [Knesset Members] and other public figures. The circles said they feared Al-Husayni might be killed by the PLO, whose leaders take a dim view of his "cozy" relations with Israeli politicians.

Prime Minister Shamir, said the sources, felt that the talks with Al-Husayni by "naive politicians" were unauthorized and "opposed to the government guidelines."

"The most they can achieve is inflaming the atmosphere, thus encouraging the PLO and terrorism, even causing murder," the sources said. "Only talks initiated by the government can lead to something. People meeting Al-Husayni as private citizens, like MK Yosi Beilin (Labour) and MK Amnon Rubinstein (Centre-Shinuy) cannot promote peace in any way."

Al-Husayni Decries Killing of Soldier, Others

TA1902133389 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni, one of the most prominent figures in East Jerusalem, today denounced what he termed the killing of the soldier [who was also a yeshiva student] in Jerusalem. At the same time, however, he denounced what he called killing actions against Palestinians.

In a talk with our correspondent Arye Gus, Al-Husayni said that killing actions will not benefit the future of the two peoples. Consequently, the peace process must be promoted. Also, the occupation, which is one of the causes of all these problems, must come to an end.

Likud Attacks Meetings With Palestinians

TA1902122889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] At this morning's cabinet meeting, Likud Ministers Sharon, Moda'i, and Qatzav argued with Alignment ministers over the meetings with Faysal al-Husayni. The Likud ministers attacked what they called pilgrimages and lining up to be received by Al-Husayni. They claim the meetings violate the government's basic guidelines. Alignment Ministers Moshe Shahal and Ya'aqov Tzur responded by saying that meetings with local Palestinian leaders should take place.

Our correspondent Arye Golan reports that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir concluded the debate by saying that such meetings damage Israel's image and cause more harm than good.

Minister Ari'el Sharon claimed at the Cabinet meeting that the security situation has worsened. Minister Rabin responded by saying that whoever thinks that all the problems can be solved by giving an order to the IDF is mistaken.

Ministers Yitzhaq Moda'i and Rafi Edri are calling for a detailed Cabinet debate before Foreign Minister Moshe Arens' meeting with his Soviet counterpart in Cairo.

SLA 'Sources': Amal, PLO Increase Attacks

TA2202091989 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 22 Feb 89 p 12

[Text] Marj 'Uyun—The Shi'ite Amal militia and the PLO have mounted more than 20 attacks on South Lebanese Army [SLA] positions in the security zone this week. Amal headquarters in Tyre took credit for a number of attacks in the last two days, SLA sources said.

Amal men also mined a number of roads in the security zone. A source at SLA headquarters said it was clear that there was cooperation between Amal and the PLO, and this again opened Amal to the possibility of Israeli retaliation.

The source added that the PLO was trying to escalate attacks in the region, although all its attacks in the last few days were directed against targets in the security zone and not Israel itself.

Amal fighters shot dozens of mortar rounds, RPGs and katyusha rockets towards SLA positions. The PLO fighters, coming from camps in Sidon and Tyre, launched at least five attacks on SLA positions.

SLA positions returned heavy tank and cannon fire towards villages north of the security zone where the terrorists were thought to have hidden. In the village of Zawtar, seven people were wounded, among them three children. In Al-Nabatiyah, five people were wounded by SLA fire. In a suburb of Sidon, a number of houses were damaged by shots fired by SLA tank positions toward the outskirts of Jazzin.

Settler's Death Caused by Gas Leak, Not Firebomb

TA2102161289 Tel Aviv Educational Television in Hebrew 1500 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The police determined this afternoon that the death of Alfe Menashe settler Albert Jerasi was caused not by a terrorist act, but by a technical fault: namely, a leak in his car's fuel system.

An investigation by police forensic experts has established that Jerasi's car bore no traces of a Molotov cocktail or of the introduction of fuel into the passenger compartment through any other means. It was found that the rubber hose connecting the gas tank to the fueling nozzle passed through the passenger compartment behind the driver's seat. In an experiment carried out by the experts, it was determined that when the gas tank is full, some gas can leak from the connection between the rubber hose and the fueling nozzle, thus seeping into the passenger compartment. This is what occurred in Albert Jerasi's car, causing his death.

Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories

24 Wounded on 20 Feb

TA2102122189 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 21 Feb 89 p 12

[Report by Michal Sela' and Kenneth Kaplan]

[Excerpts] The current three-day general strike in the West Bank and Gaza, the murder of Samal [Sergeant] Shlomo Kohen and the apparent abduction of Samal Avi Sasportas are all indications of the Palestinians' desire to maintain the intifadah's [uprising] momentum, Chief of General Staff Dan Shomron said last night.

Briefing defence reporters in Tel Aviv, Shomron said the Palestinians were searching for ways of maintaining the momentum of their uprising, out of a concern that they were not attaining their goals and that if their activities faded from the eyes of the world, they would not achieve anything. This fear, he said, motivates some Palestinian elements to resort to murder and "real terror."

According to Palestinian sources, 24 people were shot and wounded in the territories yesterday, the second day of the general strike. The IDF spokesman had no information on the number of injured.

In other developments, the military authorities prevented the distribution of Arabic newspapers in the territories, and the army destroyed one house and sealed three others belonging to the families of suspected petrol-bomb throwers.

Several voluntary associations in Nabulus sent a memorandum to the foreign consuls in Jerusalem, asking them to take steps against Israeli measures in the territories. [passage omitted]

The West Bank also witnessed widespread clashes between troops and Palestinians, and at least eight people were shot and wounded, said Palestinian sources.

In a clash in Biddiya, troops shot and wounded Sulayman Yaakub, 14, in the mouth. In Buruqin, near Tulkarm, a sniper shot and wounded Mustafa Umar, 20, in the neck. A spokesman at Al-Ittihad Hospital in Nabulus described Umar's condition last night as serious. Five others were wounded in clashes in 'Anabta, Qabatiyah, Bethlehem and Zawiyah. [passage omitted]

5 Wounded; Unrest Expected

TA2102190089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The 3-day general strike declared by the Unified National Command of the Uprising ends today. Several incidents were reported in various locations throughout the day, and at least five residents were reported wounded. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports:

As far as the level of violence is concerned, the general strike in Judaea and Samaria did not exceed what is usual. There were scattered incidents of stone throwing and challenging troops; army reaction followed and, usually, so did Arab casualties.

The response to the strike, however, was complete. The PLO and the Unified National Command of the Uprising managed to disconnect the residents from the gray routine of the uprising for 3 days, focusing attention and headlines on the struggle against Israel and on the renewed combat spirit. Few Gaza Strip workers left for their jobs in Israel during the strike, but most left on the eve of it. In Judaea and Samaria the situation varied, but in general, the departure for work was only partial.

Before this strike is fully over, more extended ones are being considered. In the meantime, the Unified National Command of the Uprising is taking action to ensure that the momentum of tension continues. Tomorrow is the anniversary of the founding of the DFLP, Nayif Hawatimah's organization, one with considerable weight in Judaea and Samaria. Its power is centered in the north, in the vicinity of Ya'bad and Qabatiyah, north of Janin. Besides its political activity, it promotes terrorist cells. Its political stands are marked by a gradual transition from a Marxist-rejectionist orientation to stands held by 'Arafat and the PLO, such as were reflected in the recent PNC convention, for instance. In Judaea and Samaria, however, it strictly observes its separateness and independent activity. DFLP slogans have recently appeared in various locations, and the IDF is prepared for the possibility of disturbances.

Against the backdrop of these developments, a curfew was declared this evening in Tulkarm and the neighboring camps. Military sources have announced four wounded in Janin, Nabulus, Shuwaykah, and Silwad. Hospitals have reported a higher number of casualties.

In Gaza's Al-Burayj refugee camp, a local was killed in a violent clash between families feuding over land rights. Four people were wounded. The curfews in Gaza's Al-Shati' camp and several Rafah neighborhoods remain in effect.

Arab Killed, Soldier Wounded

TA2102201689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] An IDF soldier was stabbed tonight by an Arab in the village of Abu Dis, near Jerusalem. The soldier was slightly wounded. He fired at the assailant, killing him.

Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the man, a resident of the village of Al-'Ayzariyah, along with several Arab youths, attacked IDF soldiers who were carrying out operational activities. All the assailants were detained and are now being interrogated.

More on 21 Feb Incidents

TA2202140289 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 22 Feb 89 p 4

[Report by Uri'el Ben-'Ami and Ayelet Mazor]

[Excerpts] One man was killed and 18 others were wounded yesterday during demonstrations in various locations in the territories on the 2d day of the general strike. [passage omitted]

During yesterday's riots seven residents were wounded in Janin, and two were injured in Rafah. Also, a young man was wounded in the Nur al-Shams refugee camp near Tulkarm, another in 'Askar near Nabulus, as well as two residents of the Balatah and Al-Fari'ah refugee camps, a youth in Qalqilyah, a resident of 'Anin near Umm al-Fahm, and a resident of Bethlehem.

The security forces carried out arrests in the village of Nahallin in the Bethlehem District, which led to a riot and clashes with IDF soldiers. Two youths were wounded and curfews were imposed on Nahallin and the neighboring village of Husan. [passage omitted]

4 Houses Sealed in Gaza

TA2202063089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Last night, the security forces sealed four houses in the Gaza Strip. The homes of three residents of the village of 'Abasan were sealed. The three had set the local council building on fire because IDF representatives had visited the place. In Gaza's Al-Shaja'iyah neighborhood, the house of a resident who threw stones at IDF soldiers from the rooftop of his house was sealed. Our correspondent Arye Gus adds that this resident was also given a 14-month prison term.

The security forces this morning imposed a curfew on the city of Janin and the adjacent refugee camp. The curfew on Tulkarm and the neighboring refugee camps remains in effect. These steps were taken in the wake of information that disturbances are planned.

The anniversary of the establishment of Ahmad Jibril's DFLP is being marked in Judaea and Samaria today. The security forces are deployed to prevent violent demonstrations.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 0500 GMT on 22 February adds that "the head of the Palestinian Writers Association Mutawaqil Taha has been placed in administrative detention. He is the fifth Palestinian journalist put in administrative detention over the past week. Taha is accused of being a Fatah activist and has been held in administrative detention twice before."]

King Husayn Leaves for Hirohito Funeral 20 Feb

JN2002202489 Amman Television Service in English 2000 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] His majesty the king left Amman this evening for Tokyo to attend the funeral of the late Japanese Emperor Hirohito. During his visit to Tokyo, his majesty will meet several world leaders.

His majesty the king was seen off upon departure from Amman by his royal highness the crown prince, His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah ibn al-Husayn, and Her Royal Highness Princess Haya al-Husayn. His majesty was also bidden farewell by the prime minister, Mr Zayd al-Rifa'i, high-ranking government officials, and the Japanese ambassador to Jordan.

His royal highness the crown prince was sworn in as regent during his majesty's absence abroad. His majesty is accompanied on the visit by the chief of the Royal Court, Field Marshal al-Sharif Zayd ibn Shakir.

King Husayn Interviewed on Relations With PLO

OW2102025189 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 1224 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Interview with King Husayn in Amman by correspondent Shinichiro Kawaguchi on "News Today" program; date not given—recorded; interview conducted in English with Japanese translation in subtitles; the following is from the English]

[Text] [Video shows Husayn seated, facing Kawaguchi in an office]

[Kawaguchi] Do you have any plan to mediate a meeting between Chairman 'Arafat and a high-ranking official of the United States?

[Husayn] I believe that if there is a chance for a meeting with President Bush [during the funeral for the Japanese emperor], I will certainly discuss the Palestinian problem and encourage a continuation of the dialogue between Washington and the PLO. I am not aware of any plans of Chairman 'Arafat to be there at that time, but we are working very closely together in an atmosphere of trust and confidence. I believe that our actions in disengaging from the West Bank some time ago—although we are totally committed to the cause of a just and durable peace—we are very involved and trying to seek it and make it a reality in this part of the world.

The Palestinians certainly have on their side—at the level of the PNC and Chairman 'Arafat before the world at Geneva, before the United Nations, and in subsequent statements—have answered all the requests that were ever made by the United States and others for Palestinian contribution for the establishment of a just and durable peace and the resolution of the Palestinian problem and all its aspects. This has started a dialogue between Washington and the PLO, and I hope that it will continue and develop and evolve rapidly. On the other hand, as far as Jordanian-Palestinian relations, they are rather unique as you well know, but more than that, I believe that our actions have ensured that many of the doubts of the past that clouded these relations have disappeared, and that when we build together, we will build on a very, very solid foundation in the future.

Royal Decree Releases Administrative Detainees

JN1802185089 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] On the occasion of the historic pan-Arab event of the proclamation of the Arab Cooperation Council, His Majesty King Husayn has issued a royal decree releasing all administrative detainees. The decree also releases all those who have served more than half the sentences imposed on them by various courts and halves the prison terms of other convicts.

Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i has issued instructions to the competent authorities to execute the royal decree.

Al-Rifa'i Briefs Cabinet on ACC Meetings

JN1802190389 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] The Council of Ministers met under Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i today. The prime minister briefed the ministers on the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] leaders' meeting in Baghdad. He detailed the distinguished pan-Arab role His Majesty King Husayn has played along with his brothers, His Excellency Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, His Excellency Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, and His Excellency YAR President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, in achieving the pan-Arab plan, which constitutes a progressive, realistic formula for cooperation among the four Arab states to serve their peoples' and the Arab nation's higher interests.

The Council of Ministers has sent a message of appreciation and pride to His Majesty King Husayn, to bless this great pan-Arab step, and to express support for His Majesty King Husayn's efforts in the interests of the Arab nation.

The Council of Ministers also endorsed the ACC agreement and agreed to submit the decision to His Majesty King Husayn for his royal signature.

During today's session, the Council of Ministers also agreed to issue a set of Jordanian stamps commemorating the ACC.

Al-Rifa'i Pays 'Short Working Visit' to Syria

JN1902173589 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Amman—Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i returned to Amman today from Damascus following a short working visit to Syria, where he conveyed a message from His Majesty King Husayn to his brother, His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad.

He was received at the airport by Dhuqan al-Hindawi, deputy prime minister and education minister; and a number of ministers. Leaving Damascus, Al-Rifa'i was seen off by Syrian Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, several ministers, and the Jordanian ambassador in Damascus.

U.S. Congressman Confers With Al-Rifa'i

JN2102125989 Amman Domestic Service in English 1200 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Zayd al-Rifa'i, received in his office today U.S. Congress member Les Aspin, currently visiting Jordan in the course of a tour in the region. Talks during the meeting tackled the latest developments in the area and Jordan's commitment to seek a just and permanent settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Meets With Chief of Staff

JN2102184489 Amman Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 12 Feb 89

[Text] In Amman, the Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Talib conferred with the visiting U.S. Congressman Mr Les Aspin on regional military affairs, aspects of cooperation between the two countries, and other matters of mutual interest.

Joint Committee With USSR To Meet in April

JN2202073889 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 22 Feb 89 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T)—The joint Jordanian-Soviet economic committee is to hold its first meeting in Moscow in the first half of April and Ministry of Industry and Trade's Secretary General Muhammad al-Saqqaf has been charged to lead the delegation for the meeting, according to an official announcement.

The announcement said that the committee will discuss trade deals on equal basis between the two sides and will probe areas of cooperation in tourism which would entail encouraging Soviet tourist groups to visit Jordan.

The two sides will also explore the possibility of implementing joint projects in fertilisers and timber processing, and discuss the question of holding a Jordanian industrial fair in the Soviet Union which will sell products directly to the public, according to the announcement.

Also on the agenda, the announcement said, is the question of opening a Jordanian trade centre in Moscow to promote the sale of national products.

The joint committee was formed last year to help develop trade and bolster economic ties between the two sides.

Last month an announcement here said that the Soviet Union will import its first consignment of Jordanian phosphate during this year in implementation of an agreement signed by the two sides in Moscow in December 1988.

The announcement also said that the two sides agreed at a meeting that a Soviet technical committee should visit Amman to pave the way for the April meeting in Moscow.

Jordan at present imports Soviet iron ore, timber, paper, equipment and chemicals.

Al-Saqqaf said upon returning to Amman from a recent visit to Moscow that the Soviet Union wished to purchase 40 types of Jordanian products ranging from toothpaste to washing machines and pesticides.

Shams al-Din Rules Out Hostage Issue Solution

NC2002121290 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1145 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din [deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council] has ruled out an imminent solution to the issue of the foreign hostages held in Lebanon. He told Kuwaiti newspaper AL-SIYASAH that the difficulties facing this issue still stand. Shams al-Din also hinted at the presence of an Israeli plan to invade the South.

Tehran Cites Shams al-Din on Salman Rushdie

NC2002065690 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Sunni and Shi'ite circles in Lebanon continue to condemn the author of "The Satanic Verses" and to support the dictum on his execution.

The Central News Unit reports from Beirut that Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council, described Salman Rushdie's "The Satanic Verses" as irreverence to Islam and an insult to the dear prophet and said: One who mars the face of Islam and its just beliefs or mocks the prophet of Islam is an apostate and is condemned to death. He stressed: Following Imam Khomeyni's decree is a must not only for the Shi'ite but for all Muslims, and everyone should rise up to carry out this rewarding dictum.

Fadlallah Supports Edict

LD2102171589 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Al-'Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, the prominant Lebanese theologian, today in an interview with international television [name indistinct] in Beirut, attacked the recent decision of the member states of the European Economic Community against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He added: the decision was made after demands by global arrogance.

Al-'Allamah Fadlallah added: Imam Khomeyni, in his position as jurisconsult, is above all the Muslims in the world and in that capacity he has decreed a religious edict on Salaman Rushdie—in his capacity as religious [dhar'i] leader of Islam. Such an edict is not confimed to the Muslim people of Iran. Therefore, those who intend to adopt measures against the Islamic Republic of Iran must know that their act would be against all the Muslims in the world.

Referring to the recent decisions by the EC member states against the Islamic Republic of Iran he said: The religiously binding edict of Imam Khomeyni stems from the principles and rules of God, the Koran and the tradition of the Prophet of Islam, peace be on Him and His Scion. It thus is regarded as a defense of Muslims because defending the prophet of Islam is tantamount to defending the territory and principal issues of Muslims. Such a defense must not be construed as opposed to freedom because freedom does not mean being allowed to insult the sanctities of divine faiths and the messengers of God.

In conclusion he stressed: Defending the sanctities of Islam is far more binding than defending the territory and freedom of Muslims. Therefore, it is the right of Muslims in the world to confront countries which intend to oust their freedom and deny them justice on earth.

'Awn, Ja'ja' 20 Feb Meeting Termed 'Positive'

NC2002122790 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] A major positive step was taken today within the framework of the relaxation being witnessed in the eastern areas. Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn and Lebanese Forces Commander Dr Samir Ja'ja' met at midday today.

Sources close to Dr Ja'ja' described the meeting as positive and as the culmination of the recent agreement.

Meeting 'Shrouded in Ambiguity'

NC2002125589 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Confusion surrounds Lebanese Forces' descriptions of the meeting between General Michel 'Awn and Samir Ja'ja' at B'abda palace at 1100 today. The Lebanese Forces media ignored the meeting in their subsequent newscasts, contenting themselves with reporting on a telephone conversation between Phalangist Leader George Sa'adah and Gen 'Awn as part of the parliamentary follow-up committee's efforts. Sources at the Al-Yarzah Army Radio denied that such a meeting had taken place. However, our correspondent later had contact with those in charge of the army radio transmitting on the FM wavelength, and they did not deny that the meeting had taken place.

Thus, the subject of the meeting between Gen 'Awn and Samir Ja'ja' remains shrouded in ambiguity.

In any case, even if the said meeting did take place, the situation in East Beirut remains ambiguous under the military truce in force between the Army and the Lebanese Forces since Thursday evening, pending the outcome of the 'Awn-Ja'ja' talks.

Ja'ja' on 'Positive' Meeting

NC2002153789 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] The situation in the eastern areas is heading toward normalcy, a fact confirmed by Lebanese Forces Commander Dr Samir Ja'ja''s visit to B'abda today.

Commenting on the result of the B'abda meeting, Dr Ja'ja' said: This was a positive meeting during which we dealt with all of the issues. We now can regard all of last week's events as being in the past never to recur.

Asked if there are now expectations for a speedy translation of this fact into actual deeds, Dr Ja'ja' said that a major part of this operation has already been realized. At this time, you can consider the translation of this fact into deed as final.

Sources close to Dr Ja'ja' have described the meeting between Dr Ja'ja' and General 'Awn as the culmination of their agreement and a confirmation of the unifiction of the ranks and the consolidation of political cooperation. An understanding has been reached on all measures to restore normal life to the eastern areas and to resolve all security problems, the sources concluded.

In another development, Gen Michel 'Awn received the six-member parliamentary committee, which is charged with holding contacts on the situation in the eastern areas, at 1600 today.

In the meantime, the four-member committee consisting of Brigadier General Jean Farah and Colonel 'Amir Shihab as representatives of the Lebanese Army, and Dr Tawfiq Hindi and lawyer George 'Udwan as representatives of the Lebanese Forces, met at Al-Yarzah.

Ja'ja' on 'Awn Talks; Denies Assassination Attempt

NC2002201389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1802 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Interview with Lebanese Forces commander Dr Samir Ja'ja' by unidentified Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation correspondents, relayed by (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon, on 20 February; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja', can you explain to us how your meeting with General 'Awn went today?

[Ja'ja'] Today's meeting was held in continuation of yesterday's contacts, and was held in a similarly positive atmosphere. A final agreement was definitely reached to repudiate all acts of violence and military movements. The problems were raised in a preliminary manner. Agreement was reached to continue the discussion of all the points raised in order to resolve them as required.

[Correspondent] How will the agreement be achieved in practice?

[Ja'ja'] Definitely through continuous dialogue and through continuous consultations. Nobody should imagine that all of the world's problems are being raised and that there are hundreds of disputes, as if it were the Middle East issue being resolved. No. There are some differences in views on certain matters that require continuous meetings like today's meeting. Other meetings will be held by some technicians and specialists to find the required solutions. It is not an impossible task that requires much effort. All problems can be resolved if the sides concerned have good intentions.

[Correspondent] Are we to understand that the atmosphere for a dialogue is positive?

[Ja'ja'] Yes, yes, the atmosphere is positive.

[Correspondent] Dr Ja'ja', it has been reported that your motorcade came under some gunfire while you were travelling to B'abda Palace. What are the facts?

[Ja'ja'] Yes, true, but not gunfire. There was a simple incident, something accidental. There is nothing more. It was a simple incident.

[Correspondent] Can we seek a little more detail. Radios are carrying three versions on this. Can you describe the incident to us as it occurred?

[Ja'ja'] I am telling it as it happened. Our motorcade was proceeding to the palace. A riot patrol passed. The patrol did not know that the motorcade was ours. It was actually going to escort our motorcade together with young men in my company. The riot patrol did not know that the motorcade was mine. The patrol members thought that there were gunmen on the road who could endanger me.

For this reason, they immediately surrounded the young men who were with me. But, regrettably, by the time they recognized us, there already had been some shooting. As soon as they recognized us and saw me, they said: Oh. We have come to accompany you. The incident was over immediately and we continued on our way. The incident was a matter of absolute fate. It was not an incident in the true sense of an actual incident.

[Correspondent] This means that the incident was not intentional.

[Ja'ja'] No, no, no, certainly, certainly, certainly not. It was an accident, a matter of fate. [Correspondent] Last night Dr Ja'ja', you reassured the people. Do you still have the same impression about the situation.

[Ja'ja'] Even more so. It is finished, the situation is normal. The situation has returned to what it was before last Tuesday-Wednesday night. The situation which existed before then has returned. All of us will return to our jobs, schools, factories, fields, shops, offices. A 100-percent normal life. We and the government are discussing some problems which cropped up last week in order to find suitable solutions.

[Correspondent] Will there be another meeting with Gen 'Awn?

[Ja'ja'] At this time, meetings can be held at any time, every day, indeed, every hour.

[Correspondent] Will the schools reopen tomorrow?

[Ja'ja'] I imagine the education minister has issued a statement in this regard. Yes, I imagine the schools will function in a normal manner. The Education Ministry made a decision 2 days ago that the schools would reopen. There is nothing to prevent the schools from opening tomorrow.

[Correspondent] We have a question. The positive things to which you refer, the citizen now sees as tangible facts. Nevertheless, as far as geographical areas are concerned, one now can see distinct areas; specifically, those under Army control and those under Lebanese Forces' control. I mean in this respect that the Lebanese Forces are not going to the areas of southern al-Matn, and the Army is not going down to the coastal areas.

[Ja'ja'] I do not want to go into these details. We must not forget that bloody events occurred 4 or 5 days ago. A few days are needed before the situation returns completely to normal among all military personnel. However, let us not ponder these details, particularly as measures will be taken. For instance, all personnel started to move around in all areas this afternoon. There are no Army areas and Lebanese Forces' areas. What kind of talk is this? All the areas belong to the Army and, certainly, all the areas belong to the Lebanese Forces. No one has placed a ban on any other, or spoken about any other. No, no, everyone is welcome everywhere, in all the areas.

[Correspondent] All the positive things that have been spoken about have remained mere headlines. We have not learned exactly on what agreement has been reached, both with respect to financial issues and [incomplete question as heard].

[Ja'ja'] This is a professional secret. A situation of this type was, especially under the burden of fire and steel, a little tangled. It requires a little calm, a few details, and constant efforts, particularly far from the eyes of the media. The media has foiled many, many plans that were still being formulated. Do not worry, everything will reach you in time. Do not attempt to sensationalize it before its proper time or you will spoil the politics. The media must follow politics, not the other way around. Do we agree?

Beirut Radio on Army-Lebanese Forces Clashes

NC2002184689 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Informed sources have characterized the Lebanese Forces militia commander's visit to the Defense Ministry and his meeting with General Michel 'Awn as a maneuver the details of which are not yet clear, especially since Ja'ja''s statements after the visit did not concern what transpired at the meeting.

Meanwhile the latest reports from the eastern sector say that one person was killed and another was wounded in a clash between the two parties in the Jisr al-Basha area. Unofficial sources have stated that the clash took place between a security force from the Lebanese Forces and one from the Army. The forces were accompanying the armored BMW car in which Ja'Ja' was riding as he proceeded to the Defense Ministry. One of Ja'ja''s companions was killed and another was wounded in the clash. The Lebanese Forces commander's car then continued on its way, escorted by an Army security force.

Meanwhile, a source close to Gen Michel 'Awn stated this afternoon that Gen 'Awn had reiterated his previous conditions with regard to the situation in the eastern area. The source made this statement after today's meeting between Gen 'Awn and Samir Ja'ja' at the Defense Ministry.

'Intensive' Gunfire Heard in East Beirut Area

NC2002180089 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1730 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Media sources at the Lebanese Army Command in Al-Yarzah have reported that intensive gunfire was heard in 'Ayn al-Rummanah [in East Beirut] this evening. The circumstances surrounded this gunfire are still unknown.

Lebanese Forces Attack Army Roadblock

NC2102163789 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 1530 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The Army roadblock on the Chevrolet point came under machinegun and rocket attack from the positions held by the Lebanese Forces in 'Ayn al-Rummanah at 1000 today. The personnel manning the roadblock returned the fire. Urgent contacts were carried out to contain the clash.

In another development, the Army Command in Al-Yarzah today published a list containing the names of 148 Lebanese Forces personnel who were detained during the recent clashes.

Meanwhile, a Lebanese Forces source affirmed to AFP that the Lebanese Forces also hold Army personnel, but the source did not give their number.

Issue Statement on Fighting

NC2102181389 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The Lebanese Forces Command Council held its weekly meeting this afternoon under the chairmanship of Dr Samir Ja'ja'. The council discussed the bloody events which have taken place in the free Lebanese areas and issued the folowing statement.

First: The destructive war which raged through the residential areas of the free areas last week, causing extensive loss of life among the citizens and damage to their livelihoods and possessions is a preposterous war which has sown evil and reaped only terror, fear, destruction, and devastation. The worst thing about this war is that it diverted the patriotic rifles from their right direction and turned them toward the bosoms of the brothers in a collective and futile act of suicide.

The worst result of the painful incidents on the political level has been that all the political forces in the free areas, instead of pooling their efforts to confront the siege imposed on them from outside and to bolster the patriotic Lebanese stance, turned overnight into fragmented and conflicting forces involved in a battle that lacked any political, security, or military objectives. Instead of letting dialogue be the method of reaching understanding on some minor matters among the basic parties, fighting became the language used.

The Lebanese Forces, which have been extremely pained by what occurred, hold that internal fighting is prohibited regardless of causes and circumstances and irrespective of any necessary efforts and sacrifices. Reaching understanding among the patriotic parties, a situation which prevailed prior to the recent events, is the pivotal base around which all the parties in the free areas rally on the basis of the political stance constantly set forth by the Lebanese Forces. Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn expressed this stance in Tunisia and reiterated it after his return to Beirut. This stance is also being carried to Kuwait today by Maronite Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Butrus Sfayr.

Second: The Lebanese Forces Command Council voices appreciation for the sincere efforts made by numerous foreign and domestic parties to calm the atmosphere and restore a normal situation. The Council notes, in particular, the efforts of Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Butrus Sfayr, the Lebanese Front as represented by its parties and its forces, especially Dr George Sa'adah, and the majority of deputies in the free areas. The Lebanese Forces Command Council comments foreign stands, particularly the position adopted by fraternal Iraq which showed extreme interest and feeling toward the issue and made sincere efforts to stop the bloodletting among the brothers. Iraq's position and gesture have been well received by free Lebanese people.

Third: The Lebanese Forces reemphasize that the correct start to resolving the Lebanese crisis is the evacuation of all foreign armies and armed forces from Lebanon and a presidential election in a free, democratic atmosphere. The Lebanese Forces' strategy has always been and will continue to be the unification of all capabilities, making all possible efforts available, and placing all the people's energies, both those of the legitimate forces and those of the people and the resistance at the service of a single, clear, and specific goal—liberating Lebanon first, and then rebuilding a free state and extending its authority over all Lebanese territories.

Fortify Positions in E. Beirut

NC2202121489 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Arrivals from East Beirut say that the Lebanese Forces have completed fortifying their positions there. The forces have mined the entrances to Al-Ashrafiyah, the coastal road, and the eastern approach to 'Ayn al-Rummanah.

According to military sources, the Lebanese Forces have placed a barricade around the military council in Al-Karantinah and are operating patrols in civilian vehicles. The patrols are not, however, checking people's identities.

ICRC Resumes Work in South 17 Feb

NC1702182189 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 17 Feb

[Text] The International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] resumed its work in the south today, 85 days after it suspended its work in the area following the kidnapping there of one of its employees, Peter Winkler.

Spiritual Leaders Depart for Kuwait

NC1902122689 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Lebanese spiritual leaders, Maronite Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Butrus Sfayr, Greek Catholic Patriarch Maximus V Hakim, Lebanese Mufti Hasan Khalid, Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council, and Shaykh Mursi al-Nasr, representative of Druze spiritual leader Shaykh Muhammad Abu Shaqra, left Beirut for Kuwait on board the same special plane at approximately 1330 today. They are due to meet with the Arab ministerial committee there.

Greek Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius IV Hazim is due to depart Damascus for Kuwait on an identical mission.

Syrians Consolidate Deployment in Suburb

NC1802073089 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] The Syrian forces have consolidated their deployment in the streets of Beirut's southern suburb. They have established fixed and mobile roadblocks and operated foot patrols in some areas, particularly in Al-Shiyah, Al-Ghubayrah, and Bi'r al-'Abd to ascertain whether military offices have been closed. The Syrian forces have stormed some of these offices and will storm every place suspected of housing gunmen or weapons.

A joint operations room will be established to regulate the movement of Amal and Hizballah gunmen between the traditional contact lines and in the suburb's quarters, provided that none of them carry weapons in residential areas.

Group Attacks Syrian Post in W. Beirut

NC2002072190 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] A group from Shaykh Subhi al-Salih troops has contacted our radio and claimed responsibility for attacking a mobile roadblock manned by the Syrian occupation and intelligence forces in the area of Al-Mulla in West Beirut at approximately 2000 last night. The group said two men from Syrian intelligence were killed, and a number of the troops manning the roadblock were wounded as a result.

'Violent' Clashes Taking Place East of Sidon

NC2102110689 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Violent clashes are taking place on the Lib'a, Kafr Falus, and 'Ayn al-Mir combat lines between the Popular Liberation Army-the Martyr Ma'ruf Sa'd forces and the agent militiamen. Various types of weapons are being used in the fighting. Shells have landed in a number of residential areas East of Sidon. One shell fell in Sidon at 1115, causing material damage.

A responsible military source in the Nasirite Popular Organization has issued a statement in which he maintains that this escalation by the agent militia is an attempt to cover up what is happening in the occupied border strip area and an attempt to prevent the return of displaced Christians to the area east of Sidon, after a number of families recently returned.

Resistance Groups Carry Out Operations in South

NC2102130989 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Excerpts] A resistance group attacked an occupation forces' position on 'Alman hill at 0900 today, using automatic weapons and rockets. The number of casualties among the occupation forces could not be determined. [passage omitted]

At 0930 today, a group of the Lebanese Resistance Battalions-Amal planted an explosive charge on the 'Alman-Al-Shumariyah road. The charge was detonated as a joint patrol of enemy and agent forces was passing. A second group attacked the patrol vehicles, which consisted of five M-113 armored personnel carriers, and the soldiers riding in them. Subsequently, the enemy opened concentrated artillery fire at Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, and the Al-Litani river basin. Heavy material damage was caused and five residents of Zawtar al-Gharbiyah were wounded and taken to 'Ala' al-Din Hospital in Al-Sarafand for treatment.

This morning Kafr Rumman came under violent artillery fire, lasting about 1 hour, from the occupation forces' positions on Jabal Tuhrah and Al-Suwayda' hill.

Resistance Attacks Israeli-Lahd Position

NC1902173289 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] The Lebanese Resistance Battalions-Amal have announced that one of its groups used rockets to attack a position jointly manned by Israeli forces and their agents in Al-Shumariyah at 0200 today. The fighters destroyed the control tower and a 12.7-mm machinegun. Three fighters were injured, one seriously, and were transferred to hospitals in the liberated areas.

Immediately afterward, enemy forces bombarded and raked the scene of the operation and nearby areas.

Israeli Settlement Reportedly Shelled 21 Feb

NC2102074089 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Fundamentalist sources announced this morning that the Israeli Nahariyya settlement was shelled at dawn today. Several rockets were used in the attack. The Israeli Army retaliated by shelling the Buyut al-Sayyid village, in the border strip, and Israeli helicopters raked the Al-Mansuri groves.

Israeli Aircraft Overfly South, Mountain

NC2202095189 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Israeli warplanes flew over the south and mountains this morning, breaking the sound barrier.

Jordanian Prime Minister Arrives in Damascus

JN1902093389 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0915 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i arrived in Damascus at 1030 this morning. Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi led the delegation meeting him at the airport, along with several ministers. Al-Rifa'i and Al-Zu'bi left in an official motorcade to Al-Rawdah Palace in Damascus.

Meets Al-Asad

JN1902124089 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Excerpt] President Hafiz al-Asad received Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i at 1230 today. Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi also attended the meeting. [Passage omitted]

Departs 19 Feb

JN1902161089 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1539 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Damascus, 19 Feb (SANA)—Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i left Damascus this afternoon. Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi led those who saw him off at the airport.

Damascus TV on Call From King Husayn to Al-Asad

JN1702213589 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad today received a telephone call from His Majesty King Husayn of Jordan, during which the king informed the president of the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council. The conversation revolved around Arab situations and their developments. The president wished his majesty the king success in his efforts in the interests of joint Arab action.

Relations With USSR 'of Strategic Value'

JN2002143489 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Syrian-USSR relations have always been and are still of strategic value. The Soviet Union has been a staunch supporter of Syria and a champion of the Middle East cause. Syria has been a reliable ally of world peace and progress in the Middle East. The two countries agree on preserving global peace and protecting the world from wholesale destruction. Further, the two countries have a common perception of the United Nations' role and both revere its charters and peoples' rights to freedom, progress, and peace.

The past few decades have shown these developing relations to be beneficial to both sides as well as to Arab and world liberation movements. This relationship, nurtured and fostered by His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad from a pan-Arab strategic standpoint, has always been the target of hostile plots. This relationship is an asset in Syria's and the Arab nation's struggle for regional peace and justice and Arab rights, and all attempts to damage it have failed.

USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's visit to Damascus at the beginning of his Middle East tour maintains a tradition of bilateral consulations and coordination at the highest level. Syria supports the Soviet Union's struggle and efforts to build new international relations and to entrench detente. The USSR also supports Arab rights and legitimate aspirations for an equitable, durable, and comprehensive peace based on Israel's withdrawal from the occupied Arab territory and recognition of the inalienable Palestinian rights. There is no doubt that USSR-Syrian cooperation and coordination in the search for Middle East peace through the United Nations is a key element in present and future developments in the region.

Shevardnadze Visit 'Important'

JN1802065789 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 18 Feb 89

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-THAWRAH has published an article on the visit to Damascus by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, which says: This visit is very important not only because of the world importance of the regional situation and developments, but also in light of the relations of friendship and deep cooperation between the two countries—Syria and the USSR.

AL-THAWRAH says: The facts and developments have proven that Syrian-Soviet relations, which are based on the spirit of cooperation, friendship, and mutual interests of the two peoples and countries are being entrenched. These relations reinforce the ties of cordiality and understanding as well as coordinate positions. These ties, which have been firm for 4 decades, were crowned by the signing of the treaty of friendship and cooperation in 1980. Syrian-Soviet relations have gained further momentum and effectiveness thanks to the efforts of Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Mikhail Gorbachev. They have undergone a qualitative development in all economic, political, and cultural fields.

AL-THAWRAH adds: In light of regional developments and attempts by the imperialist and Zionist forces to impose capitulation on the Arabs, this coordination between Syria and the USSR gains importance. This coordination will also support Syria's firm policy positions, which are well respected in the region and the world.

Press on Shevardnadze Visit

JN2002065189 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 20 Feb 89

[From the press review]

[Text] The Syrian newspapers have editorialized on the importance of Shevardnadze's visit to Syria and the results of his talks with President Hafiz al-Asad. AL-BA'TH says: The Soviet foreign minister's regional tour that began in steadfast Damascus and Syria, which occupies a prominent position and enjoys sincere and developing relations with the USSR, the friendly and faithful country, is significant. What increased the importance of this visit is the announcement by Shevardnadze at his press conference that he heard very deep and important ideas from leader Al-Asad.

AL-BA'TH adds: Observers stated that the guest's talks achieved better results than expected. These results certainly fall within the framework of the existing relations of cooperation between the two friendly countries. These relations' first objective is the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region and the support of the march aimed at achieving world peace and security.

Under the headline "Damascus and Moscow Support the Just and Comprehensive Peace," TISHRIN says: Damascus, which was the first station in Shevardnadze's Mideast tour, has opened its arms to the Soviet official out of the importance of deepening and entrenching relations of cooperation and friendship between Syria and the USSR. These relations are based on mutual respect, confidence, and consultation to serve the Arab people's interests, objectives, and aspirations as well as to champion their just cause and to support and defend their rights. These relations also aim at serving the Soviet people's interests and progress, the wellbeing of mankind, world security, and peace.

Fighting Between Lebanese Factions Scored

JN1802155989 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The bloody fighting witnessed by the eastern areas of Lebanon over the past few days, which has inflicted more casualties and damage on the property of innocent citizens, did not come as a surprise to the brothers in Lebanon, particularly those who have been subjected to the hegemony and tyranny of the warring, cliquish, isolationist forces. Also, it did not come as a surprise to any observer who takes an interest in the situation in fraternal Lebanon and its development, especially after the military coup on the night of 23 August 1988.

General Michel 'Awn's announcement that the Lebanese Forces were fascist, using every illegitimate means to implement their orders, was not a new discovery that needed so much time to be reached. These forces have been well known by all Lebanese and Arabs from the moment they were charged with the mission of blowing up the bases of the Lebanese entity and fanning the flames of sedition in Lebanon according to orders and instructions from the Israeli enemy's leaders, who embraced them and provided them with support, funds, and training in the use of arms.

Ever since he strengthened his unholy alliance with the fascist forces, Gen 'Awn has known that they wanted to use him as a temporary front to hide behind. He provided them with this cover by his greed for power; by launching a campaign of fabrications against the noble pan-Arab role played by Syria in Lebanon; and by extending his hand to ask for assistance from Saddam Husayn's regime, which tried, on its part and through alliances with the suspect isolationist forces, to attack the Arab role in the Lebanese arena and to become compatible with the Zionist plots, which aim to fragment Lebanon and divide it into petty secterian cantons.

To say that the Lebanese Forces want to create a petty sectarian state at the expense of a single united Lebanese homeland will only be stating the obvious, which does not need assertion. On more than one occasion, Ja'ja' himself has announced that the area of his state extends from Kafr Shima in the south to Al-Madfun in the north. Therefore, there is no need for any new assertions. The fascist forces, with their different symbols, left no room for doubt or interpretation regarding their objectives and trends, which are hostile to the unity of Lebanon and its Arab character.

Since they were formed, the fascist Lebanese Forces have grown and been raised with Zionist supervision and support. Their growth has always been at the expense of the legitimate authority in Lebanon. They block the roads linking Lebanese areas, impose illegitimate taxes and tarrifs for the passage of citizens and goods within the single homeland, steal the state's revenues, and control the public services for their own interests. All this is done under the eyes of the legitimate authority.

They assassinated Prime Minister martyr Rashid Karami by using the Lebanese Army to undermine its standing and credibility. 'Awn himself was the commander of the Army and did not raise a finger. They assassinated one of 'Awn's close assistants, Colonel Khalil Kan'an, but 'Awn did not later object to allying himself with these fascist and agent forces to usurp power and strike a blow against the formula of coexistence and the charter that has existed among the Lebanese since independence. Following all this, Lebanese citizens all over the country, particularly in the eastern areas, have the right to ask: What happened to make General 'Awn remember the nature of the Lebanese Forces, which is old and known to everyone? What prompted this tragic, bloody conflict that inflicted heavy losses in the eastern sector of Beirut? And why now, since all that has been announced so far is not new or surprising?

Lebanon does not need more blood or damage. It needs one fundamental thing—to achieve reconciliation among its sons, a reconciliation based on political reforms and providing the requirements for awakening the united, just Lebanon, which is affiliated to its Arab nation and from which is excised sectarianism and the malignant Zionist tumors that live in the Lebanese body. Those who are seeking to achieve these noble objectives and all those who are sincere about Lebanon's unity, Arab character, and the coexistence of its people will find that they have to clash, sooner or later, with the Israeli phenomenon and plots. Any battle outside this context will not only be useless but will also increase the suffering of the Lebanese citizens, who have put up with so much and should not have to pay for battles that are far from their national and pan-Arab objectives, although they will be their fuel.

Afghanistan

Najibullah Addresses Kabul Province Residents

LD2002175289 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1605 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Speech by President Najibullah to the people of Kabul provincial districts at Delkosha Palace in Kabul on 20 February—recorded]

[Text] I seek God's protection from Satan. In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Praise be to God, the Lord of the universe, and peace and progress be upon Muhammad, the messenger of God, his family, and all his companions. [preceding Koranic verses spoken in arabic]

May God's peace and blessing be upon you. It is a pleasure for me to see you once again, my respectful and honorable elders. It is good that we sit together and consult each other at these sensitive moments—of course, difficult, historical, proud, and fateful moments of Afghanistan—on the order of Almighty God.

For 10 years Afghanistan has burned in the flames of fire, smoke, and shelling, including that of machineguns, artillery, bombs, etc. Some people have developed an appetite for combat and are saying that they want to create a bloodbath in Afghanistan. However, you and I are witnesses to the fact that the Afghan nation is drowning in a bloodbath. It is burning in a hot oven. I think a real child of this homeland, a true servant of his people, should not raise his voice in such an irresponsible manner and say: I will boil Afghanistan in a bloodbath.

On the contrary, we should roll up our sleeves and free the Afghan people from this bloodbath. We should bring them out of this burning hot oven. This will be the greatest service that we can fulfill both for God's creatures, as well as God's own satisfaction. What have we done? God, may he be glorified, says in the Holy Koran that Muslims are brothers; bring peace among them. If two tribes of Muslims resort to slaughter and killing, you must sow peace and compromise among them.

God's words on peace appear more than 160 times in the Koran. Dear friends, these verses have not only been revealed to Najibullah, but they are applicable to every Muslim. Everyone of us is responsible before God. One angel is sitting here and another angel here on my shoulders. One takes note of good deeds and one takes note of our bad acts. On judgment day this record of our deeds will be brought before us, and God will say that I ordered and instructed you that this is the way of God and the course of Islam. What steps have you taken to implement my great verses of the Koran? This question will be asked of old, young, man, and woman; it will be asked of the city-dweller and the villager. But from the other side you hear: We will fight to the end. You advise me whether we should accept the order of God or the words of Gulbuddin. God says peace is good. Gulbuddin says: I will fight to the end; I will fight to the last Afghan. You dear elders, my dear uncles, I have called you here to ask your advice on whose order I should follow. [words indistinct from audience] Thank you. It must be so, provided we are true Muslims.

It was for this reason that we declared the national reconciliation policy. The Afghan nation fought against Alexander of Macedonia and gave him a crushing response, as well as the Mongols and the British. But I will tell you that during all those historic periods, the Afghan nation had unity. Today, unfortunately, our nation is being torn apart by the enemy. And this disintegrated nation is now in the hands of aliens. So regarding the issue of national unity, it must first of all be discussed in order to bring this nation together. God says in the Koran: Grasp the rope of Allah and do not cause division. All of you must unite with one another. My second question is whether or not we should unite. God asks: Who is it, whose hands are those that do not allow us to unite and that Afghans should kill and eliminate each other, commit murder, bloodshed, and corruption? This is Pakistan. Pakistan does not want to see itself, even for one moment, next to a powerful, strong, free, independent, and firm Afghanistan. The more Afghanistan is divided, scattered, and in pieces, the more it will be in the interest of Pakistan.

What is Pakistan? It was created by the English colonialists. It is the British who want, through Pakistan, to take revenge on the gallantry, heroism, self-sacrifice, struggle, and combat that our fathers and forefathers carried out for the freedom and independence of the country. They were able to free Afghanistan with [words indistinct] gun and with sickle and stick. Following the defeat of the British in Afghanistan, the defeat of the British empire began. I wish they would come and face us themselves. And if they had done so, undoubtedly our people would have been united.

The bad thing, the worse thing, about this time is that a number of our brothers—our body, our blood, our soul, our skin, our bones—are in the hands of the enemy and that they are being used against each other. This is the second reason why we should unite and not allow the aims of our enemies to be implemented in Afghanistan.

I must say that this war and struggle is not only against this state or the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA]. This struggle, in fact, is against Afghanistan and its people, to disgrace, despise, and insult this nation in whatever way possible.

The journalists come, film certain people, in certain mountain areas, who are wearing certain hats, who kill others in a given way. Then they broadcast these films to all the world, as if—God forbid—everyone is wild in Afghanistan. Those who fight in the mountains do not know either that these journalists, these reporters, do not portray their bravery, their honor, and their pride. They portray their fear (?against themselves). What one should do to inform everyone that the question about an Afghan and the people from Afghanistan is not discussed, but that our ancient forefathers' land, Afghanistan, is discussed. [sentence as heard] Well, there was a question about a nation uniting, but there are reasons and causes that should be resolved in order to remove these indignities, these walls.

Another of those reasons was that Islam is in danger in Afghanistan. Distinguished and esteemed ones, you yourself know that God Almighty says in the Holy Koran that He has, without doubt, sent down the message, and he will assuredly guard it. Almighty God is protecting and guarding Islam and the Koran. A faithful Muslim, who fully believes in this noble verse and this word of God, is fully confident that Islam cannot be in danger in Afghanistan. Nowhere can it be in danger because God protects it. I do not think that there is any greater guarantee than this. Who says that Islam is in danger? Those who say this put themselves in question, because they do not believe in God's promise.

Furthermore, for the implementation of God's order, we mentioned this fact in the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan that Afghanistan is an Islamic country, the sacred religion of Islam is the religion of the people of Afghanistan, and that no law can be (?passed contrary to its teachings). If you study the constitutions of Zahir Shah and Muhammad Da'ud's periods, such articles did not exist in their constitutions. Not only what is on paper, but all of our political and social principles and the present order itself are forging ahead in accordance with this law. We see what is going on in practice. You see that the five pillars of Islam are in force in the country.

The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, fought in all jihads in the frontline. I wish they too were fighting in the frontline. Yet they send our brothers to confront us, while they themselves are trying to form a government in Rawalpindi, in Pakistan, at the orders of the Punjabis. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, said that if one mosque remains [word indistinct]. You see for yourselves that in every street, every bazaar, and every village, not only is there at least one mosque but many, as well as takyakhanas [Shi'ite religious centers]. More and more attention has been paid to them.

Who gave us the right to kill innocent people every day? They blindly fire rocket from somewhere; I reply with artillery. Who is hit by this and who is hit by that? What is the result? Killing, murder, and tragedy. Incidentally, if you notice, these rockets and artillery hit the homes of the poorest people.

We can also discuss the question of Islam in a different manner. They claim: Najibullah, we know you, you are an infidel—which God forbids—we know your heart. Only God Almighty knows about people's hearts. If they claim that they are Shadads, Namruds, and Fer'un [despotic historical figures] and claim to be God and know about people's hearts, then they should admit this. Then they should not say that they are Muslims. But if they say that they are Muslims, then their hearts belong to God and he will decide. They should not regard themselves as God—God forbids this. If the word of God is written on their foreheads and is not written on Najibullah's forehead, then they have the right to say that they are Muslims. If something has been engraved on their chest, then they should show it to us, too. But, if being a Muslim depends on practice, then I implement the order of God and say I want peace. They say they want war. Which one conforms with Islam?

See the people of Afghanistan, the poor, the deserving people. See them yourselves on the streets and in the bazaars; look at them in front of the bakeries, in front of the gas stations. Look at the small children who get up at 0500. They do not even have a sweater; they have a shirt and pants which are really thin; they shake from the cold. They wait in front of a bakery for up to 5 to 6 hours. We do all that we can to deliver them a piece of bread, a piece of bread.

He [not further specified] repeatedly blocks the road and takes away the piece of bread from this orphan, this poor man, and this widow. These 2 million people, who are in Kabul, are not Najibullah. Have we taken away anybody's bread? Is highway robbery allowed by Islam? They might say that they have their own fronts. What are the fronts for, to serve the people or work against them? To serve the Muslim people and consolidate Islam or work against them? What will happen if we are unable to deliver food to them? Najibullah announces to you to come and let us adduce from Kabul to Shamili, to Charikar, to up there how much wheat do you want? How much sugar do you want? How much butter do you want, brother? I will deliver it to you. Why do you plunder them? [words indistinct from audience]

That is why I am here and want to consult you. When they say: Brother, we do not have any goods for our fronts, all roads and cities are under your control, there is nothing coming from Pakistan, there is snow still in the mountains, and we are forced to steal these vehicles. We ask him: Why do you have to steal? I have called upon you as my brother. Until yesterday you were called rebels. I called you the opposition, brother. We used the English expression: opposition. We officially recognized your identity cards. We invited your commanders and embraced them. We released around 18,000 of your prisoners. If you are hungry, you should tell me. Tell me if you do not have wheat, if you do not have bread. Stay there. I will not tell you to surrender. I will not take your arms. I ask you, here, how much do you want brother to be a remedy for me and a remedy for you? What is the meaning of burning vehicles? What is the meaning of plundering, stealing? From whom? From a widow whose cries and pain reach to the sky?

They thought the state would come under pressure through such actions. But now the people curse them. I must tell you honestly, the people curse them. The people can see how hard I work to deliver a piece of bread. Who takes this piece of bread away?

Who will the people support? We have no option but to send in a force when our convoys, some five or six of them, are burned on the way and some of them plundered. This force, friends, has a tank, an armored carrier, artillery, and a helicopter flying overhead. Friends, I have [word indistinct] rockets which reach as far as Qarah Bagh; I use them too. Then we have to fight. What does he do then? He goes off to his caves. Now you think what suffering he causes us. [words indistinct from audience] Exactly, exactly. We have an enormous amount. They have reached (Hayratan), and they are all piled up. We had an agreement; they are there. I have them in Pol-e Khomri, in Mazar-e Sharif—more than you can imagine, millions of them. If I have around 10,000 tonnes per month in here, this will be enough for coupon holders and bakers; for 2 months, 20,000 tonnes; and for 3 months, 30,000 tonnes. If they reach here everything will be alright.

They were given a decree to go there and mount a military attack after the withdrawal of the Soviet forces and capture Kabul. Do they now wonder if a military attack is possible? Their losses will increase, and they will be defeated; their value and prestige will be undermined before all the world. So, they say: Let us choose another path. I say that you must listen. Whose words do you hear? Who gave you this order to go and attack Kabul? I tell you and I give you reasons that if you want Kabul, this is not the correct way; there is another way. [words indistinct from audience]

The second question was the question of Islam. They said: We are fighting because you brought the Soviets. We sat together and thought perhaps the people are right, because the Soviets are here. The people might have been provoked because of that. We questioned the people, we spoke with them one by one. At the assemblies we asked them what we should do. The moment the Soviets leave Afghanistan, everything will be all right, they said. Well, I went and talked with the Soviet leadership, with Gorbachev and told him: You have a very good policy, you want tranquillity throughout the world. If you want to improve relations with the United States, then come and put out the fires which are burning in all regions of the world.

There were problems between Israel and Palestine, betwen Iran and Iraq, in Angola, Nicaragua, Cambodia, and Afghanistan, too. He said why not? This is our policy. What should we do to bring tranquillity to Afghanistan? I told him there is a pretext which the enemies utilize. They say that the Soviet units are in Afghanistan. Let us make a decision to say goodbye to the Soviet units. He accepted; we shook hands. We came and began the Geneva talks and then decided that after 9 months these units should leave. We have a question—I asked this yesterday in my speech—if this jihad was truly against the Soviets, then when the Soviets left it should have ended. I ask you, tell me sincerely, was there more war yesterday or today? [audience shouts "today"] There is more war today. What does it mean? It means that they did not fight the Soviet Union yesterday. There were Soviets in every province. They did not fight. But they fight with their Muslim brother. It perplexes me. Well, I proposed that they come to sit down in the Ka'bah, the home of God. But they did not sit with a Muslim in the Ka'bah. They sat down with a Soviet, while they told you that if your sleeve were to touch a Soviet, your arm, let alone your sleeve, would fall off. Yet they sat with him [Vorontsov] and shook hands with him and had a lunch with him and had a dinner with him. They sat with him there in Saudi Arabia and in Pakistan.

At the beginning they said they had achieved a political victory: The Soviet who did not recognize us, now recognizes us and sat with us for talks. A few days later they said: No, those talking with the Soviets cause division among us. Then a few days later, half of them said that they wanted to continue talks with the Soviets and the other half said they did not want to continue the negotiations. I do not know which group is right. Sitting at a table with a Muslim is in the first place correct; sitting in Mecca is correct in the first place. Why do they reject this? When they talk to the Soviets, what do they want from them? My dear and grand and very respected elders, tell me what they want from the Soviets. They say remove Najibullah from the seat of power and give it to us. They want power from the Soviets. Look, all of the negotiations were for this reason. O brothers, until yesterday you called us the puppets of the Soviet Union, the puppet of the Soviet Union. But we dismissed the Soviet Union, and now you want power from the Soviets yourselves. What part of it conforms with Islam?

We removed this pretext as well. The limited contingents of the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan. In the past, there was no Soviet Union when we fought Alexander of Macedonia, Britain, the Mongols, and others. There was no Soviet Union. Our forefathers were able to safeguard this land. Cannot their children safeguard the country? You elders, tell me whether we cannot safeguard this country. For this reason, with confidence in you, trust in you, and relying upon you, I proposed to the Soviets to pull out of here. For this reason, I now propose to you that our reliance is on God, but your support was on my mind when I told the units of the Soviet Union to pull out of here and embarked on such a course. I now rely on you as your son, who shoulders in this very difficult historic stage a very great responsibility, a responsibility you, through the grand assembly, entrusted on him. I need your support and backing.

The whole world is looking forward to the time when Afghanistan will be torn apart. There is pressure on the leaders of the alliance of seven to convene the shura in Pakistan, convene the shura, convene the shura. Friends, they sat, and then the alliance of eight of Iran said that they do not recognize the shura. Again they sat and told Sibghatullah Mojadeddi, who a month before had been appointed as the head of the alliance of seven: You, go away, we have brought Muhammadi and made him president; you have gone and dealt with the Iranians—they also wage a jihad—you have concocted a fraud with them; we remove you. They removed him.

Gaylani and Sibghatullah declared through the BBC that this shura is defective. We do not accept this shura. Zahir Shah's group comes to the streets in Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Chaman, Quetta, and other places and demonstrates that this shura is like solitary confinement. Who represents the people of Afghanistan? They are sitting there and cannot convene a shura. Here blood is running. Think about it. Pakistan tells them it should be convened. The shura should have been formed before the Soviets withdrew completely. I'll tell you the reason: Here will be one government, and there would have been created another government. Two governments. A number of embassies—the Western ones—closed their gates to go, and then when a government had been formed, they would say: We have officially recognized that government, that government—the plan of the dismemberment of Afghanistan.

Two governments in one Afghanistan, with the help of the Pakistani commandos and Pakistani soldiers who, at this moment, wear the uniforms of the counterrevolutionaries and the opposition in Jalalabad. They plan to occupy Jalalabad and then bring the government created in Rawalpindi on orders of the shura, which has been convened by the military intelligence of Pakistan. That shura has approved this government, brings that government to Jalalabad, and the Western countries extend it official recognition and then ask the whole world: Which government do you recognize, this government or that government? That government. Then, declare confederation or amalgamation with Pakistan, and Pakistan has the right to come to any part of Afghan territory and then they will say I have pledged to form confederation.

The economy of this land has been sold; the humanity of this country has been destroyed—not a hundred, not a thousand, not a million: one and a half million people have been killed so far. They now sell Afghan soil. As it has been said by (Haji 'Abdul Qadir Khan), they want a reward from us. The Afghans should be appreciative. We have kept you here, now you should pay us. What is the price? Sell the soil of Afghanistan to us. All of our words about our struggle, our jihad, and our Islam were turned into selling the land. In Pakistan, up to now, English law has been in force. There is no Islamic shari'ah; go and ask. So now they want to take the soil of Afghanistan there, to amalgamate it, and make a confederation. The whole thing is concealed in this.

Let us now take a look at the last question: the withdrawal of the units of the Soviet Union. I told you that you would say: you said so, Najibullah; you promised, but did not carry it out. I told you that I am withdrawing the Soviet units from Afghanistan, I did so. What is left? They say we have given martyrs; we want power. The whole thing was about power, about positions—not Islam, not jihad, and not service to the people. At the price of the people's blood, they now want power and positions; the whole fuss was for this. Najibullah was prepared, true. Come and let us divide the government. They say leave it completely. We tell them, let us collect all the weapons, because the poor are being killed all the time. Let us collect the weapons.

What you have obtained from the Soviets, I will send back to the Soviet Union. I announced this, before the whole world I said this. What you have obtained from the United States, from Pakistan, and from other Western countries—I have obtained from one infidel, but you have obtained it from 20 infidels—return it to those countries. These people have seen so much torture and trouble and pain that they should not even have a kitchen knife in their homes any more. let us ask for an international guarantee: We return the weapons, and hold elections for the people. The people of Afghanistan may vote for any government acceptable to them.

You claim that 90 percent of the Afghan people are with you. If Gulbuddin has 90 percent of the Afghan people on his side, Najibullah then should not talk of peace. Gulbuddin should be the first to talk of peace. Let there be a cease-fire, peace, let us have elections. If he has 90 percent of the people with him, he will have the majority in the parliament, he will get the majority in Grand Assembly too. The Presidency will also be his and the government will also be his. Now I want you to say: We accept your reality so that peace can return. We accept this reality. The opposition is there. We give credence to the opposition. We will share the government with the opposition.

But this side must also be considered. It has ruled for 10 years. It has political sovereignty, half a million members of the Armed Forces, 200,000 party members, and political allies. There are seven other parties along with it. There are 800,000 members of social organizations. They say, brother, we do not accept any of them. Najibullah, gather all of them and throw them into the Indian Ocean. Can I do this? When they accept your existence, you must also accept them as a matter of fact. both sides should open their arms. The time of killing and vendettas has passed. Forget the past, as Afghans say.

We lay a big stone [indicating that a truce is worked out]; extend your hands like gallant Afghans. Like proud Afghans, show yourselves to the world as your forefathers did, as they sat and talked, untangled a knot, and laid a stone, and accordingly settled an issue. Everyone will then learn about and respect us as a people who can solve their own problems and say: they are—God forbid—not barbarians. The problem belongs to Afghanistan; it is a problem inside Afghanistan. Friends, at times there is a conference in Islamabad, some times one in Saudi Arabia, and sometimes in Iran. Why should our problems, of us Afghans, be discussed in Islamabad, Iran, and Saudi Arabia? I do not know.

The mujahidin we know conducted a struggle in the frontline within the country. Look at the mujahidin who fought against the British. Forget the fact that mujahidin governments are being set up abroad now, and that after being made there, they were exported here. This is the other question. We say first we will declare a ceasefire. The place under your dominance is in your control. Never surrender it to us. We will keep the areas under our control, under our dominance. We will form a joint—brotherly—government; it will oversee the ceasefire. In the meantime, it will draft an election law. When the situation is peaceful, we will go to the polls.

Anyone who wins the election, well, it will be his. It will be the will of the Afghan people and we accept the will of the Afghan people. They say they do not accept that either. They say that there are 5 million refugees. There are a total of 3 million; 12 million people have remained in Afghanistan. If 3 to 4 million among those inside the country are their supporters, where will I take the other 8 million people? This was the issue of government. Now tell me what remains. Tell me: Najibullah, if you carry out this specific move, calm will ensure that I fulfill it; I think a lot of what is left which I have not done to do that. [sentence as heard] There is nothing in my mind that I have not done.

Only one thing remains. Our course is peace. Our policy is reconciliation, peace to live in a brotherly fashion. But if someone wants to impose war on us, then we will be compelled to react. In that case the right of defense is our natural right.

There are numerous issues. Vital and major issues are those which matter. we are confident; you know that their leaders sit there comfortably, whether or not they agree—they cannot ever agree on the distribution of offices. The people who have really fought in this are the field commanders of the mujahidin; they really deserve respect. I said this in the Grand Assembly of Afghanistan that they deserve more respect than the leaders of the mujahidin. They are your children, we are your children. Go and visit them. I know you have connections with them. You should have contacts with us and with them. It is a must.

Ask them: Dear sons, what are you doing? War and jihad against the Soviets? The Soviets have gone; against whom do you fight now? We want to topple Najibullah, [they say] but Najibullah tells you, brothers: Let us hold elections. If you win the election, this government is yours. This is the way, not the way of war. [words indistinct] I have ready 40,000 to 50,000. You might have known that 30,000 people marched just the other day. Let us not count the Armed Forces, only the party. For instance, you bring 20,000, or 40,000 or 60,000 of my people against yours. How many will be killed here and how many will be killed there? What will be the result? I do not understand. You will be left in one piece. (?Do not count me) or the weapons, I will leave all the Armed Forces that I have formed. Let there be a few police to keep public order, and let that also be shared. Let us send back all the weapons and go to elections.

Let us ask for an international guarantee to let our country be a neutral country. Let there be no weapons, so no one will be able to organize aggression and interference and we will also have no war at home. Let us go consistently to elections, every 5 years, every 4 years. Whoever gets the vote, let him serve the people well so that the people will vote for him the second time. If we really want to have a popular government and if we represent the people, then we will be by obtaining the vote of the people.

With missiles in hand, they are shouting that all the people are with us, all the people are with us. The council is not with them; the council which they themselves have invited some 400 people from Afghanistan is not with them. You should have heard last night's news that a large number of the commanders have boycotted the council. The council has been postponed again, the council which they have themselves convened. It has not been elected here. They asked only that so and so from such and such district, sub-district, and province come to Pakistan: We are holding a shura. That shura is not with them. Still, we say, we are ready, brother, to bring peace, tranquillity, to get rid of the misfortunes, to wipe the tears of the orphans, not to increase the number of black veils; we are ready for elections. We do not want positions. If you want all of us to be together, then we divide power with you. They do not accept anything.

There is one question that I asked you here. Let me say in brief once again: First, it is God's will to maintain peace. Gulbuddin [Hikmatyar] says we want war. You choose now, which one do you want? Second, Islam is in danger. As the faithful, everyday we are in the service of Islam, may God give us the strength. Third, the Soviets have gone, jihad has no more meaning. The 'ulema are sitting here. Fourth, we are ready to divide the government; if they say they do not want a share in it, then let us hold elections—whoever wins. I wanted to ask you to give me your suggestions concerning these three or four words. You know that five persons have died; how many other children might have died? Go to the hospitals; see how many children are close to death due to malnutrition. They cannot get food. Therefore, if we are talking of a great jihad, it is said that if you have a hungry neighbor and you have the money to go on the pilgrimage to Mecca, do no go; help that neighbor. Your hajj will be a hajj for God.

I ask you, from here to Shomali, if you come from Shakardara, from Kalakan, from Qarah Bagh, from Estalef to sit with your children, come to a decision with us not to rob the highway through which the bread of the people comes. Whatever you need, tell us elders: We are going to Najibullah to tell him to meet our needs. How much wheat will I bring you per month, how much oil and other things?

Do not resort to plunder, otherwise I will have to come with tanks and guns and aircraft. Unfortunately, innocent people are killed. They should have mercy on the innocent. There are 2 million hungry people here. On one hand, they face a severe winter; on the other hand, they cannot get oil to keep themselves warm. These are the conditions. On the other hand they block the road, and then we have no choice, but—God forbid—to raze the areas to the ground. What is the advantage of such an act? I had asked you for this to suggest to you that a great jihad is that bread should be brought to the people. God is in charge of giving bread to the people. However, we are the means, we should move.

From every one of us the God Almighty asks every one of us what have we done toward maintaining peace and in the service and interest of the people. If you then said that it has nothing to do with you and tell me: you know [as heard] and your war, then I have said to you what I could. If you are ready for consultations, then tell me this moment. Promise me. I told you before that I need your support. Yesterday, you said that the Soviets are guarding us; today, Afghanistan is alone and we should protect it. We should think about the bread of the people, think about our security, think about the roads, and think about maintaining districts, villages, and cities. This is an Afghan call that has been made upon you.

If I did not count on the courage and honor of the brave Afghan people, I would not have dared. I have dared because I have you behind me. As far as the question of life and death is concerned, I should tell you that God has said in the Holy Koran that if it was his will, no matter if we surround ourselves inside seven steel castles, we die. If God does not will it, if we are under the rain of bullets, nothing will happen to us. Death and life is with the Almighty God. No one lives forever. If you know of any one who has lived for 200 and 300 years, tell me. No one knows if we going to die this afternoon, tomorrow, or 4 days later, 2 months later or 10 years later. No one knows. We do not know when death will come. So what should we fear? Tell me what should we fear.

I ask you now do not think of this as a small jirgah, but think of it as a big jirgah for a great cause the cause of bringing food, of bringing wheat to orphans, to the poor, and to the widows.

Hazrat-e 'Umar, peace be upon him, said to investigate and see. 'Umar one night wore the clothes of a poor man and went around to see what was going on in the city. It was on a dark evening. He went inside a house where a woman was cooking a pot on a fire. She and her two children were crying; the children were telling her to bring out the food—it was cooked. She said, no, it will be cooked soon. Her children told her that they were hungry. Hazrat-e 'Umar goes inside the room and asks what has happened. He asks why she does not give them food and if the food is cooked. He says the children are hungry. She says to him, brother, there sits a fellow, Khalif, and he does not know what is happening to us. When he opens the pot he finds a stone. She tells him she has nothing to cook for them. 'Umar goes away and brings back a sack of wheat on his own shoulders and he gives it to the family.

khalifah Rashdin [companion of Prophet Muhammad] has in Islam [words indistinct]. It is your duty, your religious duty. It is the duty of your children, your relatives, your villagers and the duty of those who are there. Tell them to do just this much: Let the trucks, our trucks, those in which we transport everything, come through. Do not let anyone block the road; bring sacks of flour on your shoulders—if you follow the customs of Khalifah Rashdin and the prophet of Islam. I am at your service now.

Najibullah Creates New Unit, Increases Draft

BK2102134489 Hong Kong AFP in English 1337 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 21 (AFP)—Afghan President Najibullah has decided to create a new fighting unit under secret service command as mujahidin rebels renew attacks on vulnerable government bases, Western diplomats said here Tuesday.

The new "soldiers of the revolution" will be drawn from the youth wing of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), the trade unions and other bodies and will be under the command of the KHAD secret service, said the diplomats.

The Afghan government last year created "special units" and "presidential guards" forces to beef up defences in Kabul and other important cities. It also armed some 30,000 PDPA members this month just before the completion of the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, "but most have been given virtually no training," the diplomats said. The new units are being enrolled into military service for three to six months, they said.

The regime is also intensifying its efforts to expand its military forces. "Categories of persons who were formerly exempted from service because of age, occupation or previous service are now being pressed into the ranks, often with very little training," one diplomat said. Diplomats said Kabul's intention may be to use these new conscripts as the "first line of defence." Trustworthy and better trained units would be kept for the second line of defence, where they could act both as backup and as a barrier to prevent desertions, they said.

Mr. Najibullah is increasingly concerned about the defence of his government against the mujahidin following the February 15 pullout of Soviet troops, the diplomats said. Fighting has intensified along the strategic Salang highway, Kabul's main supply route from the Soviet Union, they added. Travelers reaching here from Kabul and resistance sources here also said the government had recently moved troops from the Western city of Herat and from other cities to the capital, the diplomats said.

They added that despite government claims the food problem in Kabul had been solved "panic shopping" had taken place soon after the Soviets completed their withdrawal. Prices in Kabul were "extremely high," in most cases more than double the rate the same products fetched outside the city, they said. There has been growing resentment among the common soldiers against the better pay, food and housing given to KHAD members and other special units, they said.

Sources in Kabul said the government, in a bid to deny the rebels a hold on the Salang highway, had begun an "indiscriminate bombing campaign" against villages located near the highway. But mujahidin sources said the situation continues to deteriorate for the Afghan Army as guerrillas under Panjsher valley Commander Ahmad Shah Mas'ud have taken important posts on the Jablus Siraj hills and near the Salang tunnel in an attack Saturday that left eight soldiers dead and five wounded.

The rebels also engaged government troops in the suburbs of the eastern garrison town of Jalalabad a day earlier, said the diplomats. At least 20 soldiers were killed or wounded, they said. The crew of a BM-21 multi-barrel rocket launcher unit defected to the rebels along with their equipment, resistance sources said. Jalalabad has become the rebels' major target now that the Soviet troops have gone, the diplomats said.

The guerrillas also attacked the air field in the southern city of Qandahar Saturday, killing or wounding dozens of soldiers, the rebels said, adding that an important security outpost was overrun. They also foiled an attempt to resupply troops when they shot down a military helicopter carrying food and ammunition to nearby Qalat in Zabol Province, the sources said. Diplomats said several Afghan government military outposts around the city of Herat have surrendered to the mujahidin in recent days.

Najibullah Issues Decree on Executive Committee

LD2102161289 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The following is a decree by the president of Afghanistan on the composition of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers:

In consideration of proposal No 218, dated 19 February, of the Council of Ministers, the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers approved the following composition:

1. Deputy prime ministers.

2. The ministers of finance, commerce, and transport.

Regarding the affairs of the Council of Ministers, Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, deputy head of the country's Supreme Defense Council, is commissioned to chair the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers and to investigate [Kabul domestic 1600 Dari broadcast uses the word "supervise"] affairs of the Council of Ministers and of its Executive Committee.

[Signed] Najibullah, President of Afghanistan

Najibullah Sends Messages to Government Leaders

Message to Iranian President

LD1702203789 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, has sent a message addressed to Hojjat ol-Eslam Sayyed 'Ali Khamene'i, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The message reads in part: During these sensitive and difficult times for the country, I want to draw Your Excellency's attention—based on the profound and expanded religious, cultural, racial, and neighborly ties between the people of our countries—to the solution of the issues connected with Afghanistan, to which you have not been indifferent, taking into account Islamic fraternity. As you know, the 10 years of war and bloodshed brought nothing but killing of Muslims at the hands of other Muslims, destruction of hundreds of prayer places, religious schools, schools, and hospitals, which hurt the soul and conscience of each Muslim and responsible person.

To end this tragedy and ensure peace and security in the country and to protect the independence, territorial integrity, neutrality, and nonaligned status of the Republic of Afghanistan, the Afghan Government announced the humanitarian and peace-seeking policy of national reconciliation. As a result of this decrees were issued pardoning political prisoners, restoring property to the returnees, approving a new constitution by the Loya Jirgah, and forming a new parliament and a multiparty system. The present state of our society proves that two main forces stand against each other in Afghanistan. One of them supports ending the war and destruction very quickly and establishing peace in the country, and the other force supports continuing the war and bloodshed to achieve power.

In light of all the peace-loving measures and initiatives by the Republic of Afghanistan to achieve peace and to end the bloody war, it is requested from his excellency president of the Islamic Republic of Iran to use his moral role and prestige to end the fratricidal war in Afghanistan and to establish peace and stability in the region, and to encourage the opposition to achieve unity and think about forming a coalition government with broad bases. They should stop the war so that a safe and secure climate can be created for a national and nationwide understanding.

Naturally, the existence of an Islamic, stable, free, and independent country a neighbor of Iran will contribute to the consolidation of unity and fraternity among the world Muslims.

Message to Turkish President

LD1802124389 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] A message has been sent by Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, addressed to His Excellency Kenan Evren, president of the Republic of Turkey. While expressing best wishes to the president of Turkey, the message mentions that the withdrawal of the Soviet limited military contingents from our country has been completed in full conformity with the Geneva accords.

For 10 years the Muslim people of our country have tolerated the enormous pains and suffering of the war. The Republic of Afghanistan has made many efforts to end the bloodshed and war by constructive talks and dialogue through its declaration of national reconciliation. Despite the loyalty and sincerity of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union to the spirit and contents of the Geneva accords, Pakistan and the United States continue their flagrant violations of the accords, which is considered the cause of the continuation of war and tension.

We now request that the international community, and in particular the Islamic countries, cooperate in order to end the war and to ensure peace, to stop the interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs, and to observe the Geneva accords. We believe that, based on historical relations between two Islamic countries, the Republic of Turkey will play its role in ensuring peace and reconstruction of Afghanistan. The land of Ataturk will welcome the efforts of the Republic of Afghanistan to implement these humane and Islamic aims.

Message to Libya's Al-Qadhdhafi

LD2102231589 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The following message addressed to His Excellency Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the revolution of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, was sent to Libya by Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan.

Explaining the political development of the country, the message states that the Republic of Afghanistan, in perceiving the fact that the solution of the present political difficulties cannot be attained by military means, has concentrated all its efforts to seek a political solution of the issue, the realization of the national reconciliation policy, the conclusion and observation of the Geneva accords, and other constructive initiatives.

The message states that, under the circumstances where the withdrawal of the Soviet Union's military units has taken place on the basis of earnest action by the Republic of Afghanistan and Soviet Union in line with the Geneva accords, regrettably intervention in the internal affairs of our country has intensified, in particular by Pakistan and the United States. This situation increasingly endangers peace and security in the region, and imposes further loss of life and material on our people. The message asks the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah to discharge its role in the region for the restoration of peace and implementation of the Geneva accords on the basis of its peace seeking policy.

Najibullah Notifies UN of State of Emergency

LD2102082489 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0454 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Kabul, Feb. 20 [date as received], (BAKHTAR)—"I would like to bring to your notice that in conformity with the authority vested to me on the basis of Paragraph 11, Article 75 and Articles 143 and 144 of the Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan I have declared a nationwide state of emergency effective February 19, 1989 in my country" says the message of the president of the Republic of Afghanistan Najibullah addressed to the UN Secretary Javier Perez de Cuellar today.

Abrogation of the state of emergency in the country will be notified to you in due course, [words indistinct].

Najibullah Appeals for Help in Settling 'Tangle'

BK2002165189 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] The Afghan president, Dr Najibullah, has requested the leaders of India, China, Zimbabwe, Cuba, and the West European countries to help in settling the Afghan tangle. In separate messages to these leaders, he pointed out that the Soviet troops have been completely withdrawn from Afghanistan in compliance with the Geneva accords, but Pakistan and the United States are escalating their interference in Afghanistan.

In Rawalpindi the Afghan rebels at their consultative council continued to have differences over the choice of a cabinet for an interim rebel government in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, the Afghan prime minister, Muhammed Hasan Sharq, resigned as a 20-man supreme military council took over in Afghanistan.

AFP Details Najibullah Friday Prayers Visit

BK1802052989 Hong Kong AFP in English 0212 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Article by Alain Boebion: "Day of Rest in Kabul"]

[Excerpt] Kabul, Feb 18 (AFP)—Dozens of people wrapped in blankets crowd around canvas sheets on the snow and throw dice, while a few metres (yards) away hundreds watch silently as two dogs fight ferociously. It's Friday in Kabul, a day of prayer and family visits, the first day of rest for the capital's 2.6 million people since the Soviet Union completed its troop withdrawal from Afghanistan Wednesday.

Until the end of the afternoon, Kabul remains strangely calm, though only the day before Afghan rebels fired some 15 rockets onto the city and its suburbs, killing about 12 people, mostly children.

President Najibullah, who spent the whole week inside his palace protected by tanks, goes early in the morning to pray at a small mosque in Chari-Nau, a northern residential area. He takes his security guards with him.

Overhead, Air Force helicopters fly in twos or fours towards the east of the city but the courtyard of the Cherpoor Mosque is quiet. A woman, covered head-to-toe by a blue veil, is praying there.

The president's arrival transforms the mosque into a fortress. Scores of guards take positions inside while others are on nearby roofs and in armoured cars and a firetruck. Five gleaming Mercedes limousines are parked outside.

After prayers, Mr. Najibullah goes for a very brief walk, less than 100 meters (yards), surrounded by bodyguards and a few journalists. He tells the reporters that peace in the country "will take perhaps some weeks" and that he has made contact with the resistance and sent envoys to former King Zahir Shah, who has been living in exile in Rome Since 1973. The president returns to his car watched by a wide-eyed merchant who has obviously not understood what has happened. [passage omitted]

Wakil Assails Bush Position on Aid to Mujahidin

LD2202072189 Kabul BAKHTAR in English
0430 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Kabul, Feb. 21, BAKHTAR—While the people of Afghanistan are waiting impatiently for restoration and maintenance of peace in their war-stricken country, have [words indistinct] the promises and irresponsible assertions of George Bush, the US President, at the press conference of Feb. 16, 1989 in the White House on continuation of US military and financial aids to the Afghanistan extremists which aroused the anxiety and surprise of the people.

This was stated here by 'Abdul Wakil, foreign affairs minister of the Republic of Afghanistan (RA) in an interview with our correspondent.

It is noticed that George Bush wishes to follow the policy of his predecessor in Afghanistan. But he should know that the Reagan administration carried the responsibility of the ten-year long war and fratricide as well as destruction in the territory of Afghanistan.

The Afghan foreign minister asked the question why the US Government has not been satisfied with killing of hundred thousands persons and injuring a great number of others who were valuable wealth of Afghanistan but wants to carry on war until all Afghans are killed which conforms with the doctrine announced three years ago by Pentagon as an alternative to the national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

Wakil again puts forwards another question that why the US Administration ignores the fact that the people of Afghanistan never accept a government formed outside the country or imposed on them from the outside.

No patriotic Afghan will respect the government formed in Rawalpindi and Islamabad by the a small number of extremists and certainly such a government may not be recognised in the international arena.

Wakil went on to say that the USA delivered deadly arms to the opponents of the Afghan Government under the pretext of presence of the Soviet limited contingent in the RA, but with complete withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan there exists not pretension for the USA to call a small number of extremists as "freedom fighters" and equip them with arms and money for killing of their brothers and countrymen. Such an action is fully contrary to all internationally accepted norms. Surely, the UN Charter and the 43rd Resolution of the UN General Assembly condemn such US actions.

The US Government should realize that all cooperations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union are based on the mutual creditable treaties and agreements between the two sides. These treaties are signed officially in full conformity with the international laws and they have international credibility.

Referring to the signing of the Geneva accords on April 14, 1988, and role of the USA as one of the signatories in the Geneva accords the foreign minister added that breach of its commitments mean that the USA signed the said accords just for deceiving the world public opinions.

Although it is too late, it would be necessary and logical if the US Administration refrain from playing with the destiny of the Afghans and let them to heal their wounds caused by the ten-year long war. This is the serious expectation of the Government and people of Afghanistan.

Wakil Sends Message to UN Official on Aid

LD1902101889 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] 'Abdul Wakil has sent a message to Geneva addressed to His Excellency Kenneth Dadzie, secretary general of UN Conference on Trade and Development.

The message notes that Afghanistan is a developing, landlocked country, a member of the international community that thas been engaged in a fratricidal, devastating war for the past 10 years. Aware of the present realities, the Republic of Afghanistan has declared a realistic and humanitarian policy of national reconciliation for putting an end to the futile slaughter of Afghans by Afghans. It has been resolutely supported by our people.

The message states that as a result of the constructive positions of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, the limited contigents of the Soviet Union have returned to their peace-loving country. But unfortunately, the Geneva agreements are being callously violated by Pakistan and the United States, a signatory and a guarantor.

It is mentioned in the message that the armed Afghan opposition with the support of Pakistani militarists are continuing the war and fratricide and are seeking to bring the city of Kabul and other cities under economic seige. Hundreds of thousands of our compatriots are being confronted with shortages of foodstuffs, fuel, and other basic commodities. Similarly, Pakistan and Iran are preventing the dispatch to Afghanistan of the basic commidities needed by the suffering people of Afghanistan and the humanitarian and economic aid from the UN.

The message requests that the secretary general of the UN Conference for Trade and Development provide urgent measures and facilities for the transport of goods owned by state and private businessmen and other citizens of the country, taking into account and observing the existing resolutions; and especially help in the distribution of human and economic aid from the UN to the suffering and truly needy people of Afghanistan.

Wakil Sends Open Letter to Nonaligned Ministers

*LD2102184589 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 21 Feb 89*

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil has sent an open letter addressed to the foreign ministers of nonaligned countries.

In explaning the present circumstances in the country, particularly the completion of the Soviet troop withdrawal in compliance with the Geneva accords, as well as the initiatives and goodwill of the Republic of Afghanistan aimed at ending the war and bloodshed and reducing tension in the region, this letter draws the attention of the nonaligned countries to carrying out their effective role to achieve this aspiration; that is, the restoration of peace.

This letter also states that if the Geneva accords, the resolution passed by the 43d session of the UN General Assembly on Afghanistan, and the political declaration by the foreign ministers of the nonaligned countries who met in Nicosia, are not fully implemented by the interested parties, peace will not be restored in Afghanistan. Continued war and tension in the region will threaten peace and security on a wider scale.

Foreign Ministry Assesses Howe's 'Interference'

*LD1702181489 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 17 Feb 89*

[Text] A spokesman of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the Republic of Afghanistan, commenting on the irresponsible comments by UK Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe, during which he demanded the resignation of the leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan, said the following:

Geoffrey Howe has given himself the right to interfere impudently in the internal affairs of our country, and to dictate his opinions about the fate of our people. The irresponsible assertions by the UK foreign secretary have been made in order to encourage and persuade the armed extremists to continue the fratricidal war. His assertions are in full contradiction with the spirit of compromise and dialogue, which constitutes the only path to a political solution of our country's situation.

The experience of the domination of the armed extremists in Konarha showed everyone what fate these elements—supported by Geoffrey Howe and his like—bring to the people. The convocation of a so-called shura of extremists in Pakistan shows clearly that despite all the efforts and pressures by a number of Western countries, these elements, who are frantically trying to achieve power, can not unite even for a short period of time.

Geoffrey Howe, who still assesses issues with a 19th century colonialist-type thinking, should know that those times when Britain was able to change the fate of countries by sending its combat ships and generals, have passed.

The people of the Republic of Afghanistan will never bow to the diktat of any country or any circle. They will not allow anyone to dictate over them. Everyone should know that the only way to end the fratricidal war is to begin a dialogue between all the involved forces so as to establish a speedy peace, and the formation of a government of the broad bases.

PDPA Central Committee Statement to Members

*LD2102231389 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 21 Feb 89*

[Statement issued by the PDPA Central Committee to the "gallant members of the PDPA"; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] Comrade members of the PDPA. The return of the Soviet forces to their peace-loving country has been completed. A state of emergency has been declared in accordance with the country's Constitution. It is a stage in our history that is delicate, full of responsibility, and dangerous. The whole world is watching to see how we defend the country, national sovereignty, the people, and all-round peace.

Dear comrades, with the completion of the withdrawal of the Soviet forces the continuation of the extremists' so-called jihad is crumbling, and the antagonism and differences among them are intensifying. Division is their incurable disease. Despite the intensification of the psychological, economic, and military war against us, the West, the extremists, and all Satanic forces cannot prevent this division of the exacerbation of differences among them. The enemies of the country and our people with the connivance of Pakistan's military circles have embarked on raising slogans about overthrowing national sovereignty, violating the country's territorial integrity and independence, and about the meeting of the Pakistan-created shura [council] and interim government.

Not only does this shura not enjoy the support of the majority of our people and the refugees, but again it is exacerbating the antagonism and differences among the servants of Pakistan and the United States. The confessions and discomfort of the extremists' British, U.S., Israeli, and Pakistani friends about the shameful betrayal of the shura and Rawalpindi in Pakistani Punjab demonstrates this fact.

We have set out the slogan of the independent defense of the country, of national sovereignty, of the people, and of all-round peace. This slogan is understandable and is supported by everyone, by all patriots, by all PDPA fighters, by the heroic Armed Forces, by all national and democratic forces, and by all progressive parties and organizations of our country. We have all the capabilities and strength needed for independent defense.

Fighting members of the PDPA: In the 24 years of its struggle, relying on the masses of the people and the beloved homeland, the PDPA has travelled difficult, winding but noble roads and has emerged successfully against formidable odds. History will prove that our party, together with all our friends, will emerge proudly from this formidable test, too.

The PDPA Headquarters addresses you, fighting members of the PDPA, wherever you are. The PDPA speaks to you who are in the trenches defending the homeland, in military units or headquarters, in factories or at machines, working the land, in offices, or in schools. The PDPA addresses you who are the colossal might of the infinitely tested Army of the revolutionaries and who are earnest patriots and genuine fighters.

Increase your political awareness, readiness, and combat preparedness. Close your ranks and give a crushing and decisive response to every enemy's conspiracies, and always remember that a real revolutionary party is powerful because of its indissoluble link with the masses, because it attracts their confidence and support and relies on them. The intensification and consolidation of work among the people is vitally important in the present circumstances. To serve the people and homeland is the sacred duty of every party member. Defense of national sovereignty and the homeland, territorial integrity, and peace demonstrates the determination and will of the millions of people of our country.

Fighting members of the PDPA, get close to the people. Unite with the people always and everywhere so that every party organization, every party member becomes a center of attraction for the people and a permanent focus of work with the people. All party committees and party organizations, from top to bottom, should be militarized and should be transformed into combat headquarters for defending national sovereignty, the homeland, the people, and peace. All PDPA members should take part in the independent armed defense of the localities.

All PDPA members must constantly report to the joint headquarters information and rumors concerning the enemy's subversive activities. No enemy's subversive action should be left outside the scope of party control. You should rely on cooperation and collaboration with all national and democratic forces, parties, and progressive organizations of the country. The implementation of a similar approach in social organizations should be studied; measures should be taken and realized.

Comrade members of the PDPA: With pride and honor, together with the political allies and other patriots of the country, guide the party and the sovereign country through the present bloody, narrow pass to the broad and bright horizens. Further enhance the party's credit, prestige, and capability among the masses, in contrast to leftist arrogance and its perpetration of adventurist activities, by observing the Constitution's provisions and the country's other laws in force. Be the humble servant of the people. Go among the people and tell them the truth and attract the necessary support.

Long live the PDPA! Forge ahead for the defense of the homeland, national sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, security of the people, and peace in the country! Fight until victory!

[Signed] PDPA Central Committee

Ministers Pass Measures Regulating Food Supplies

LD2102194189 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] According to a report, the regular session of the Council of Ministers was held this afternoon at its headquarters. This session discussed the draft budget and the socioeconomic development of the country for the year beginning 21 March 1989. Executive decisions were taken in this respect.

At this session necessary measures were taken concerning the better organization of transporting basic commodities to the inhabitants of Kabul city, the control and distribution of bread in the bakeries and to workers and employees in institutions and departments, the distribution of ration coupons for basic commodities to families in Kabul city in order to prevent hoarding and economic sabotage, and securing social justice in the distribution of commodities. The measures taken will then be published in the mass media for the information of the esteemed citizens of Kabul.

In order to strengthen government and administrative dicipline and enhance the level of responsibility in the departments, institutions, and workers collectives, under the state of emergency specific duties were given to those in charge of the department at this session.

Haqqani's Group Meets To Select Government

BK2102085389 Hong Kong AFP in English 0837 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Rawalpindi, Pakistan, Feb 21 (AFP)—An Afghan resistance commission led by a well-known guerrilla commander convened Tuesday after assuming responsibility from rebel politicians for the makeup of an interim Afghan government, rebel sources said. Jalaluddin Haqqani, a commander of the Hezb-e Eslami Khalis group whose several thousand fighters control vast areas of Paktia Province in eastern Afghanistan, leads the 14-member commission, the resistance sources said.

The commission was formed Monday after leaders of the seven resistance groups that form the Pakistan-based alliance continued to disagree over the appointment of Islamic fundamentalist Ahmad Shah to head an interim government inside Pakistan. Mr. Shah was appointed last week to form a government that needed to obtain a formal endorsement from the shura, but a delegate who requested anonymity told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE: "Shah is finished."

The creation of the commission indicates that guerrilla commanders have succeeded in dictating their terms after politicians failed to reach a consensus on the thorny issue of allocating ministries to the seven parties, analysts said. A source with links to commanders inside Afghanistan said the commission was formed following pressure from field commanders. Mr. Haqqani is a well-known commander who was twice wounded by Soviet-Afghan forces in the famous battle for Khowst in 1987 when he thwarted attempts to resupply the besieged garrison near the border with Pakistan.

The commission, comprised of two members from each party, five of whom are field commanders, held a first three-and-a-half-hour session late Monday. It has been empowered by all the seven leaders in the alliance to make changes "to maintain unity" in rebel ranks, said resistance sources. A participant said that 70 religious leaders and commanders in the shura, 10 from each party, had pressed for creating the commission after disagreements over portfolios resulted in the cancellation of Monday's morning session. They convinced the seven leaders and obtained a written pledge the commission's decision would be binding, he said.

"The seven leaders said to the commission that for the last 10 years they had not come together and gave it the power to designate a government," said the delegate. Field commander Ahmad Shah Mas'ud's latest message to his Jamiyat-e Eslami group in the alliance, saying he rejected Mr. Shah, was also seen as significant in establishing the commission, reliable sources said.

The commander, known as "the lion of Panjsher," said in a message that he rejected an interim rebel government led by Mr. Shah. But he did not reject the assembly, or shura, which had asked Mr. Shah to form a government. Mr. Mas'ud had already opposed Mr. Shah's nomination as prime minister last year in a different mujahidin government. Sources here said his party chief Burhanuddin Rabbani had not openly challenged the shura but had said he was not nominating any minister in the Shah government.

Moderate resistance leader Sayyed Ahmad Gaylani has also opposed the nomination of Mr. Shah as head of the government, sources in his party say. The resistance says the interim government would take over in Afghanistan once the Moscow-backed government in Kabul fell.

Interim Rebel Government Ministers Named

LD2002132289 Tehran IRNA in English 1310 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 20, IRNA—The Afghan shura being held here has appointed 15 ministers for the interim government whose president and prime minister were named earlier, according to sources. But according to Afghan media sources only four parties among the seven party mujahidin alliance based in Pakistan offered candidates for appointment as ministers.

The parties are Hezb-e Eslami-e Afghanistan (led by Muhammad Yunis Khalis group) Hezb-e Eslami-e Afghanistan (Gulbuddin Hikmatyar) Harakat-e Enqelab-e Eslami-e Afghanistan [no leader's name as received] and Etehad-e Eslami-e Afghanistan (Rasul Sayyaf). The cabinet would comprise of 35 ministers and 5 advisers.

Differences have surfaced particularly over the appointment of defence minister. Sources say there was also a conflict of opinion over the establishment of a Women's Education Ministry. According to some reports Hikmatyar is likely to get the Ministry of Foreign Affairs while the Ministry of Defence may go to a nominee of the Hezb-e Eslami-e led by Khalis, while Burhanuddin Rabbani's Jamiyat-e Eslami could bag the Ministry of Interior.

The leaders of the Supreme Council, along with Prime Minister Ahmad Shah held extensive parleys on Sunday to prepare the list of potential ministers. Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi has been nominated as president. It is expected that the more than 400 shura delegates will vote through a secret ballot Monday on the proposed cabinet.

Iran-based mujahidin have stayed away from the meetings in protest against the abrogation of an earlier agreement giving them 100 seats in the shura.

Mujahidin Prepare for Government Collapse

BK2102024089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] According to reports, the Afghan mujahidin have prepared a three-step plan for the security of Kabul in the event of a collapse of the Kabul regime. In line with this, the mujahidin have contacted 500 officers and 5 generals of the government troops. According to the plan, all arrangements will be made to prevent a bloodbath in the city after the collapse of the Kabul regime. People's committees will be set up that will take steps to meet shortages of food and other essential daily items.

An Afghan mujahidin commander has said that if the political parties failed to forge unity among their ranks, then the military commanders will be forced to assume control of the country.

Meanwhile, the mujahidin have carried out a number of operations in Takhar, Baghlan, and Nangarhar Provinces. They occupied an important Kabul regime military cantonment in (Serkhana) region of Takhar Province. Soviet troops had handed this cantonement over to Kabul militia. Forty-five militia were either killed or injured in the mujahidin attack. The mujahidin also recovered eight tanks, five military vehicles, and a large quantity of small and heavy arms. The mujahidin destroyed a Kabul regime security post in Chashmeh-ye Shir near Pol-e Khomri.

The mujahidin continue to besiege Jalalabad. A Kabul regime officer, Rahimullah, has joined the mujahidin with 19 troops. These troops also surrendered a large quantity of arms to the mujahidin. The officer said that if the Afghan mujahidin guarantee the safety of the Kabul regime troops and militia in Jalalabad, they will surrender to the mujahidin without any resistance.

Abu Dhabi Paper Interviews Nabi Muhammadi

JN2102192789 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 20 Feb 89 pp 1, 21

[By Isma'il al-Fakhrani]

[Text] Rawalpindi—AL-ITTIHAD was the world's first newspaper to interview Shaykh Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi after he was elected president of Islamic Afghanistan and speaker of the mujahidin shura command council. In the interview, Muhammadi paid tribute to the UAE and Arab support for the mujahidin and said: "The first task we will perform inside Afghanistan is to apply Islamic shari'ah and reconstruct what has been destroyed by the war." He affirmed that the transfer of power will be soon, God willing. He added that the mujahidin intend to conquer cities peacefully and said that armed jihad will be resorted to if peaceful conquering proves impossible. He pointed out that the mujahidin will give the communists the chance to repent and said that God's judgment will be carried out against them if they fail to do so. He affirmed that there are no Soviet troops in Afghanistan and added that relations with Moscow will be decided by the shura council.

On the UAE support for the mujahidin, Shaykh Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi said: "The UAE, the government and the people, proved to be the source of all goodness. It supported us materially and morally, and the position adopted by the UAE was that of a brother. Hence, we harbor sentiments of affection toward the UAE brothers, appreciate their support, and are grateful to them."

Muhammadi added: "The Arabs provided us with a great deal of support. The least we should do for them is to harbor sentiments of affection toward them. Besides, loving Arabs is part of faith. In jihad, the Arabs provided a great deal of support. They have been very generous toward us. They even sacrificed their lives for us. Arab martyrs fell in Afghanistan. We believe that they played a prominent role in the jihad, just like their Afghan mujahidin brothers."

Shaykh Muhammadi said: "The first task that the Afghan mujahidin will perform inside Afghanistan is to apply Islamic shari'ah and reconstruct what has been destroyed by the war during the Soviet invasion." He also said the biggest problem he fears is the emergence of inter-mujahidin differences. However, he added that this problem, which the Soviets and others seek to create, is being accorded priority handling by the leaders and members of the shura council. He said: Plans and programs have been formulated to close the ranks and prevent the emergence of this problem.

Muhammdi also affirmed that there are no substantial differences among leaders. He added that the differences among them are marginal and surmountable. He indicated that there is cooperation and agreement on the basics and foundations. He said the laws of the new rule will be based on both the Koran and prophetic traditions, whether these laws pertain to individuals, groups, the judiciary, the administration of social and individual justice, or the rights of males and females, as the rules governing all these issues are spelled out in the shari'ah. He added: "We have drawn up a detailed and clear policy on governing, politics, information, education, and changing individuals."

On the mujahidin's conception regarding reconstruction, Shaykh Muhammadi said: "There is no doubt that this is a big problem. We will seek the help of our Muslim brothers in this regard; and the greatest help comes from God." On the powers to be vested in the head of state and prime minister, he said: "The amir [head of state] shall consult with the influential 'ulema charged with authority. Likewise, the prime minister shall enjoy powers within the confines of the attitude adopted by the amir and those 'ulema." He added: "We are all asked to obey and carry out the provisions contained in God's shari'ah." He pointed out that the task of the six leaders comprising the shura command council is to assist the head of state in all matters. The president shall issue his decisions in accordance with their advice as "our decisions will crystallize through participation and consultations."

On the form of the government and the decisionmaking formula in Islamic Afghanistan, Muhammadi said: "The opinion of the influential 'ulema charged with authority shall be important and essential in the decisionmaking process. We are not advocating the establishment of a democratic state. No, we are advocating the establishment of an Islamic state to be based on three major authorities: the executive authority, the legislative and technical authority (the shura people), and the judicial authority. All of these authorities shall work together, cooperate with each other, and also be linked with one central authority; namely, the head of state (the legally-appointed amir). All of these authorities shall act on the directives of the influential 'ulema charged with authority".

On when and how power will be transferred to the mujahidin in Afghanistan, the president of Islamic Afghanistan said: "I cannot give unfailing and accurate answers, as this would be an indulgence into the future which is known only to God. However, considering the manifestations, evidence, and proof, we believe that this will be very soon, God willing. This will be accomplished through the pursuit of our major original method; namely, armed jihad. However, if a peaceful solution precluding combat and ensuring the attainment of all of our objectives were achievable, this would be better. We hope that cities will be conquered peacefully to prevent the shedding of innocent blood. We will give full chance to see this happen. However, if the efforts fail, we will be forced to resort to armed jihad, taking into account that the least possible damage will be caused to civilians".

On the Afghan people's support for communism, Shaykh Muhammadi said: "Hafizullah Amin said while in power in 1979 that the communists who were members of both the Khalq and Parcham factions numbered 70,000. Many of these were killed, and many others were scattered. All people with the exception of these communists are Muslims." He added that all those who experienced a form of coercion forcing them to participate in the communist government are considered Muslims. He went on to say: "Therefore, they shall not be censured and amnesty will be granted to them. As for the factions whose creed and ideology are corrupt and deviationist, they will be given the chance to repent. If they return to the fold of Islam, this will be accepted and they will receive amnesty. However, toward those who display oppression, obstinacy, and insist on the continued advocation of infidility and atheism, we will carry out God's verdict against them".

Shaykh Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi said that the refugees will return to Afghanistan once the communist government is toppled and the country is cleared of mines. He added: "The mines represent a big problem. To resolve that problem, we will seek the help of some friendly Islamic states". As for the relations with the Soviet Union after the fall of the Kabul government, Muhammadi said: "The extent of this relationship and the sort of neighborly relations to be maintained with the Soviet Union will be decided by the shura council which will be acquainted with ongoing developments, including those pertaining to our relations with the Soviet Union." He added that there are no Soviet troops inside Afghanistan and went on to say that the reports on Soviet troop concentrations along the northern borders have not been confirmed.

As for the relations with Iran, he said: "There is no doubt that they will be good Islamic relations, as the Iranians supported us." On the destination of the jihad march after the liberation of Afghanistan, Muhammadi said that the mujahidin's rifles will be directed toward any place where there is a call for jihad. He described as true the statements being made by the mujahidin to the effect that they will not remain idle. He added: "Therefore, they want to pursue the jihad to regain Al-Aqsa Mosque and secure the freedom of their Muslim brothers in the Soviet Union".

At the end of the interview, Shaykh Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, a shura council command member, responded to a question posed by AL-ITTIHAD on the allegation that the 'ulema ranks are devoid of any efficient people to run the state's affairs by saying that the presence of knowledge in man is the greatest proof of the presence of efficiency.

TANJUG Reports on Situation in Kabul

LD2002172689 Belgrade TANJUG in English
1626 GMT 20 Feb 89

[By George Crmaric]

[Text] Kabul, Feb 20 (TANJUG)—Speculations on the possible attempt to avert a state or military coup began ever since the state of emergency was imposed in Afghanistan on Friday. Such rumours were supported by the fact that Afghan President Najibullah belongs to the Parcham faction of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) while the Army controls the rival Khalq faction. The counter argument would be that if the president does not have full power over the Army and the People's Militia (sarandoy), then he is certainly inviolable in his elite guard and powerful secret police (KHAD) which he headed earlier.

The fact that the state of emergency declaration was not read out by Najibullah himself, who practically always announces important messages to nation personally, stepped up speculations on the reasons for the introduction of the state of emergency even more. [?There was] a ten-minute black out in northern [?Kabul] at the same time as the declaration of the state of emergency was being broadcast on television and radio.

Under a decree, Lieutenant-General Muhammad Sarwar Rafi' was given "complete authority" over the implementation of the emergency measures. All armed checkpoints on the main streets, intersections, squares and in front of public buildings are (?under his command). Troops in combat vehicles and tanks were ordered to "react immediately" to (?anything) "suspicious."

If the state of emergency was imposed in order to facilitate in the dealings with the mujahidin inside the cities, as the Kabul authorities claim in an explanation of the reasons for its introduction, then its going into effect is not especially "dramatic". However, it would be problematic for the authorities if the state of emergency was imposed due to the differences and frictions among Kabul's political or military rulers themselves.

Although firmer control and greater concentration of power could help in opposing the rebels, the present situation goes counter to the slogans on "national reconciliation". The seeking of a peaceful solution to the inter-Afghan problem, which would be acceptable to the majority, is the only beneficial alternative not only for the Afghan people but for the present rulers.

Instead of this, MiG-21 fighters are flying over Kabul today and the sound of cannon fire can be heard from the suburbs constantly. The authorities have just prohibited gatherings in the city. However, they have brought out PDPA followers who are giving full support to the ruling party with red flags and slogans.

Kabul Radio Details 19 Feb Military Situation

LD2002145189 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] No important combat operations have taken place in most provinces of the country. The units and companies of the Armed Forces are in control of the situation. In some regions, as a result of mopping up operations by the security forces, a number of the extremists were crushed and their weapons and ammunition and hideouts were destroyed or seized by the Armed Forces.

The BAKHTAR military section, quoting reliable sources in the Armed Forces, reports the military situation in the last 24 hours as follows:

Paravan: The extremist groups supported by the Pakistani military have disrupted peace and security by plundering and stealing the belongings and property of the defenseless, noble people of that region. The units and companies of the Armed Forces responded with crushing blows. In the course of these incidents 16 warmongerers and one of their ringleaders, Juma-e Seya, were crushed. A number of heavy weapons, light machineguns, and mortars, rockets, and their four strongholds were destroyed.

Nangarhar: As a result of mopping up operations by the Armed Forces which were carried out in reply to the destructive activities by terrorist elements, several extremist were seized by the security forces in the course of which two soldiers were martyred and three others injured.

Mujahidin Liberate Capital of Oruzgan Province

BK2102063489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
0600 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] According to reports, the Afghan mujahidin have scored notable successes against Kabul regime troops in various parts of the country. The reports say the mujahidin have liberated Tarin Kowt, the capital of Oruzgan Province. It is reported that during their operations the mujahidin killed many Kabul regime troops and took control of a huge ammunition depot. Another report says the mujahidin attacked Kabul regime troops in (Jablud Taraq) area and inflicted heavy losses on them.

'Extremists' Fire 5 Rockets at Kabul City

LD2102174189 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The [BIA] military section reports that nation seller Pakistan backed extremists who are against the peaceful life of our compatriots, revealed their fiendish faces again yesterday by committing an inhuman and savage act. These criminals fired five rockets, made in the factories of their supporters, on our compatriots' residential areas in the city of Kabul. One of the rockets landed in front of the Ministry of Returness Affairs in Microrayon No 1, martyring one of our compatriots. Other rockets landed behind the area of (Karteh-ye Sakhi) mountain near Kabul University, Bini Hesar and (Kocha-e Golferoshi) in (Shahr Naw) where they caused some damage. As a result of the incident, five compatriots received minor injuries, three vehicles were destroyed, and a dwelling was partly destroyed.

According to another report, foreign journalists visited the site in Microrayon No 1 and reported on the acts of the extremists, the so-called defenders of Islam.

40-50 Families Emigrate to Pakistan Daily

BK2002085489 Islamabad Overseas Service in English
0800 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] The Sind governor, Retired Justice Qadiruddin Ahmad, visited the Afghan refugee tentage village at Katchagarhi near Peshawar this morning. He was briefed on the relief operations and informed that influx of Afghan refugees still continues with 40 to 50 families crossing into Pakistan every day.

India

Gandhi for Broad-Based Government in Afghanistan

BK2002162689 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Excerpts] The prime minister has termed the national front as a totally unprincipled alliance with no ideology or common program. Addressing the Congress-I parliamentary party in New Delhi today, Mr Rajiv Gandhi charged that the front comprises parochial and casteist forces which engender divisive tendencies in the country. [passage omitted]

Mr Gandhi apprised the meeting of his recent visits to Pakistan and China and the development in Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. He said the Indian policy has been vindicated by the recent elections in Sri Lanka.

On Afghanistan, Mr Gandhi said India wants the establishment of broad-based government there without any outside interference.

Turning to intra-party matters Mr Gandhi said that no indiscipline will be tolerated that may weaken the party.

President Inaugurates Parliament Session 21 Feb

BK2102092289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The president, Mr R. Venkataraman, has reiterated the government's determination to eliminate terrorism. Addressing a joint sitting of both houses of Parliament on the opening day of the budget session today, the president said the government will persist in its endeavors to root out terrorism. He said the government's policy is to resolve all disputes and differences peacefully, but warned there can be no compromise on the question of preserving the unity and integrity of the nation. He said the democratic part of dialogue and discussion, conciliation and consensus, is open to all those who eschew violence and work within the Constitution. This was demonstrated in Assam, Mizoram, Tripura and the Darjeeling Hills. He said the government has opened a dialogue in finding out a political solution to the Punjab problem.

Commending the measure to reduce the voting age to 18 years, the president called upon the youths to play their full part in the building of the nation.

During his 45-minute address, the president made a general survey of the economic growth of the country during the past 4 years as well as the achievements of the government in alleviating poverty. He said the economic growth has scaled unprecedented levels of achievement and despite a severe drought, the economic has recorded a positive growth rate of 3.6 percent. A special foodgrains production program was launched and as a result there is every indication of a very good rabi [spring] crop as well as cereals and oil seeds production. The president made special reference to the steps taken to help the farmers.

He also referred to the efforts for improving the country's relations with its neighbors, including China and Sri Lanka, and the significant role India plays in the process of disarmament and easing of tensions in different parts of the world.

Later, the two houses met separately and copies of the president's address were laid on the table. Parliament also mourned the death of Emperor Hirohito of Japan. Obituary references were made in both houses over the passing away of the emperor. In the Lok Sabha, the speaker, Dr Bal Ram Jakhar, described Emperor Hirohito as a great scientist and scholar, who worked for the welfare of the people of his country. In the Rajya Sabha, the chairman, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma, said during the emperor's role Japan achieved economic, scientific and technical advancement.

Further on Address

BK2102161489 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Excerpts] The president has expressed the government's determination to eliminate terrorism and declared that we shall persistently persevere till terrorism is rooted out in Punjab. Addressing a joint sitting of the two houses of parliament on the opening day of the budget session today, Mr Venkataraman also underlined government's determination to ensure separation of religion from politics. He said an act to prevent the misuse of religious institutions was passed last year. Other steps will follow. The president reiterated that the government is open to dialogue to find a political solution to the problems of Punjab. He said steps are being taken to prevent support and assistance reaching the terrorists from abroad.

The president said it is government's policy to resolve all disputes and differences peacefully. The local sentiments of the people will be respected. But there can be no compromise on the question of preserving the unity and integrity of the nation. [passage omitted]

About the prime minister's recent visit to China, the president said the cordial and constructive discussions held with Chinese leaders have opened the way for a stable, peaceful and mutually beneficial relationship between the two countries.

On Pakistan, the president said India has welcomed the emergence of a democratically elected government in that country. We look forward to working with the new government in reducing tension and expanding cooperation.

About Indo-Sri Lanka accord, Mr Venkataraman said there has been significant progress in implementing its provisions, thus, meeting the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils within the framework of Sri Lanka's unity and territorial integrity. He said with the improvement in the situation in the island, we have been able to withdraw some of our troops.

The president said relations between India and the Soviet Union have reached new levels of closeness, range, and importance. Our relations with the United States have improved considerably with expansion in technical exchanges and economic cooperation.

On Afghanistan, he said the need of the hour is a peaceful political settlement so that further bloodshed can be averted in that country and conditions created for the safe return of refugees.

Later, copies of the president's address were placed on the table of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. Both houses mourned the death of Emperor Hirohito of Japan. Members also mourned the deaths of the sitting and former members who died during the intersession period. They observed silence for a while and later both houses adjourned for the day.

Delhi Reports Appointment of 5 State Governors

BK1902163289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] New governors have been appointed in five states. A Rashtrapati Bhawan [President's House] communique said in New Delhi today that the secretary to the prime minister's office, Mrs Serla Grewal, will be the new governor of Madhya Pradesh. She succeeds Prof K.N. Chandi. The AICCI [All India Congress Committee-I] general secretary, Mr Jagannath Pahadia, has been appointed as the governor of Bihar. The former defense secretary, Mr S.K. Bhatnagar, will go as governor to Sikkim. The present Sikkim governor, Mr T.V. Rajeswar, has been appointed as the new governor of West Bengal. Prof Nurul Hasan, presently the governor of West Bengal, will take over as Orissa governor.

The communique also said that the appointments will be effective from the date they assume charge.

Reportage on Continuing Violence in Assam

Four 'Miscreants' Killed

BK1802162089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] In Assam, four Bodo miscreants were killed in encounters with police and violence in Kokrajhar District and Udalguri Subdivision of Darrang District continues unabated. Today was the third day of the 120-hour bundh [strike] called by the All Bodo Students Union demanding a separate state for the plain's tribal people.

Official sources said in Guwahati that Bodo miscreants attacked security forces in several places and in the exchange of fire, four miscreants were killed. The miscreants kidnapped five railway employees from Sesapani and Goshainganj railway stations. About 1,000 miscreants ambushed a police party in Loriapara near Kokrajhar. The attack was repulsed. In (Dimlivil) village police recovered large quantity of arms and ammunition from the killed miscreants.

Meanwhile, combing operations in the forest of Kokrajhar District have been intensified to flush out the miscreants. Ten more companies of the CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] have been sent to disturbed areas to maintain law and order.

The northeast frontier railway has cancelled all train services between Assam and rest of the country till Tuesday [21 February] following large-scale damage to railway tracks by the Bodo miscreants. Trains coming from Delhi and Calcutta will be terminated at New Jalpaiguri and New Cooch Behar during this period. A railway spokesman said that repair works to the railway tracks are going on round the clock.

The state home minister, Mr Brighu Kumar Phukan, has invited the leaders of the All Bodo Students Union for talks on the 28th of this month to find a solution to the problem.

'Violent Activities' Continue

BK1902033089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] In Assam, violent activities remained unabated in the trouble-hit Kokrajhar District on the 4th day of the 120-hour bundh [strike] being observed by the All Bodo Students Union.

Police sources told our Guwahati correspondent this morning that miscreants killed one irrigation department employee and injured another at Gharukela village. Another miscreant was killed during an encounter with the police patrol party at (Dangtal) near Bongaigaon. In another encounter at Borgaon, the police recovered large quantities of arms and ammunition from the miscreants.

Meanwhile, bodies of the forest employees killed by the extremists were recovered at a forest camp. Another three forest employees are reported missing. Meanwhile, the Army staged a flag march at (Salakati), Bijni, and Sidli Bazaar last evening.

'Fresh Incidents' Reported

BK1902160289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Fresh incidents of violence have been reported today from Kokrajhar and Udalguri areas of Assam as the 120-hour bundh [strike] called by the All Bodo Students Union entered the fourth day. A home guard was killed in a bomb explosion in Gossaigoan while a miscreant was killed in an encounter with the security forces this afternoon. A policeman was also seriously injured in the encounter.

In other incidents last night two miscreants and a public health engineering employee were killed in Kokrajhar District. A number of houses and a high school were also set on fire today at (Gangaon) in the district. Police patrol parties were ambushed at several places.

Intensive combing operations have been launched in the forest area of Kokrajhar District to flush out the miscreants.

21 'Terrorists' Arrested in Punjab; Weapons Found

BK1902010189 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Twenty-one terrorists have been arrested in different parts of Punjab. A large quantity of arms and ammunition have been recovered from their possession. One terrorist was killed in an encounter in Amritsar District. An unidentified intruder from across the border was also killed near Ferozepore. The terrorists made an abortive attempt to hit a police post with a rocket in Ghuman village in Gurdaspur District late last night. An official spokesman said in Chandigarh that the rocket missed the target. No damage was caused except some minor injury to the constable. A massive manhunt has been launched to apprehend the culprits.

Indefinite Curfew Imposed in Jamshedpur 21 Feb

BK2102161089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] An indefinite curfew was clamped in Jamshedpur town of Bihar this morning, following violent demonstrations. The demonstrators burned some shops and threw stones on the office of a newspaper. They were protesting against the publication of a cartoon in a local Ranchi newspaper on Sunday [19 February]. Police have been deployed in sensitive areas and patrolling has been intensified.

1,000 Arrested During Kashmir Demonstrations

BK2102155689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1546 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Jammu, India, Feb 21 (AFP)—Some 1,000 activists were arrested during demonstrations here Tuesday as a pro-Pakistani Muslim group in the state legislature pressed for an early resolution of the dispute over Kashmir, witnesses and police said.

Members of the Muslim United Front (MUF) raised noisy demands when both houses of the Jammu and Kashmir state legislature met in a joint session here asking that India and Pakistan take steps to solve the "Kashmir issue without any further delay," witnesses said.

The regional party's legislators, who made the demand as state governor Jagmohan rose to deliver his customary address on the opening day of the budget session of the legislature, later walked out in protest.

The MUF legislators argued that an agreement on Kashmir in the spirit of the Shimla peace accord signed between India and Pakistan would restore peace and normalcy in the region.

The accord, which led to the emergence of Bangladesh (former East Pakistan) as an independent nation, envisaged gradual, bilateral resolution of the dispute over the predominantly Muslim Kashmir. The first two Indo-Pakistan wars were fought directly over the Kashmir dispute.

The 1,000 arrests were made here and in Srinagar, which is the state's summer capital, when activists of the pro-Hindu opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) staged demonstrations demanding the dismissal of the Jammu and Kashmir government.

The BJP alleged that the Jammu and Kashmir government, which is controlled by Chief Minister Dr. Farooq Abdullah's regional Muslim-dominated National Conference (NC) in alliance with Mr. Gandhi's Congress (I) Party, had "miserably failed" to curb secessionist Kashmiri Muslims and Sikh militants who had entered the state from neighbouring Punjab.

BJP's National General Secretary Krishan Lal and several local leaders were among those arrested here. They were charged with violating prohibitory orders, police said.

Earlier, BJP legislators had demanded at the legislature's joint sitting that New Delhi dismiss the state government.

Bombay Authorities Seize Narcotics, Gold

BK1902033789 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Bombay customs seized 37.3 kg of heroin and brown sugar worth over 38 crore rupees in the international market. They also seized 4 kg of gold valued at 13 lakh rupees.

Iran

IRNA Cites Khomeyni Message to Nation

LD2202122589 Tehran IRNA in English 1220 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 22, IRNA—Imam Khomeyni today said economic sanctions or other embargoes would not stop implementation of God's decree about the blasphemous British author Salman Rushdie for slandering Islamic sanctities.

In a message broadcast on Tehran radio, the imam assured "Western arrogance" that economic sanctions would not "force us to retreat and forego (implementation) of God's decree."

The imam was referring to the death sentence he issued against the Indian born author of "The Satanic Verses," a novel Muslims consider as blasphemous.

The radio said the imam's message addressed Islamic authorities, theologians, and leaders of mass and Friday prayers throughout the country.

"The issue of the book 'The Satanic Verses' is a calculated work to exterminate religion and faithfulness, with Islam and the ulema at the top of them. If they could, the world-devourers would definitely eliminate the name and the root of theology, but the Almighty has always been the protector and defender of this sacred torch," said the imam in his message.

The imam described Rushdie as a "foreign mercenary" and said the reason the big powers, including "leaders of blasphemy" and the EEC had become infuriated and resorted to "desperate attempts" was because "today they regard Islam as a boastful, dynamic and epic ideology, and are anxious over realising that the room for their malice has been restricted and their mercenaries cannot write against (Islamic) sanctities so confidently as they did in the past."

To protest the imam's death sentence against Rushdie, EEC nations on Monday decided to withdraw their ambassadors and senior diplomats from Tehran. Iran retaliated Tuesday by recalling all its ambassadors to EEC states for consultation.

A number of senior Iranian officials, including the president, the prime minister and the foreign minister have described the EEC move as ineffective.

Also Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Larijani told IRNA in an interview Tuesday that Iran would have to pay a price, adding that "but it is worth it."

Imam Khomeyni said "we derive the grudge of the Western world against the Islamic world and jurisprudence from these very points. The matter (for the West) is not to defend an individual but to support an anti-Islamic current."

Speaking at a news conference on the same subject in Belgrade, President 'Ali Khamene'i today said the concept of freedom of speech should not be confused with freedom to insult the opinions of over one billion people throughout the world.

"Over the past few days, we have been witnessing a very ugly event which will in all likelihood continue to excite public and Muslim opinion throughout the world," Khamene'i told a well-attended press conference hours before his departure for Romania on a two-day official visit.

This event, he added, consisted of two parts: first writing a book which hurt the feelings of over one billion people, and secondly, protection by international policies for "this ugly and indefensible act."

Of the two, the president said, the second was the least acceptable. The governments which irrationally defend Rushdie had simply exposed themselves for what they were. Their defence of the writer raised many questions as to their claims that they are acting out of respect for human rights.

How is it possible, Khamene'i asked, to profess belief in freedom of thought and opinion while accepting the fact of an insult to the opinions of over one billion people?

On the EEC decision, he said their action was "fruitless and mistaken," and Iran will retaliate.

"There is no solution to the Rushdie affair," the president concluded. "An arrow has been shot, and is unerringly aimed at its target."

Bush Supports EC Envoy Withdrawal From Tehran

LD2102165189 Tehran IRNA in English 1638 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Athens, Feb. 21, IRNA—U.S. President George Bush said he fully supports the EC decision to withdraw its ambassadors from Tehran as a protest to Imam Khomeyni's decreeing of death penalty for Salman Rushdie for his blasphemous book 'The Satanic Verses.'

In a press conference Tuesday in Washington, carried live by T.V. monitored here, Bush in obvious defence of the Indian born author who happens to hold British citizenship, said he would hold the Iranian Government responsible for any attack against American targets.

Asked if he would support any EC economic sanction against Iran, Bush said he would discuss the matter with French President Francois Mitterand when he meets him in Tokyo this week where the two men will be attending the funeral of late Japanese Emperor Hirohito.

Diplomats' Recall Not Equal To Break in Ties

LD2102162889 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The British Foreign Office has informed the charge d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran that Britain had recalled her diplomats from Iran.

According to the report of the Central News Unit, Mr Akhundzadeh-Basti, the charge d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran in London, said the British authorities were stressing that the summoning of their diplomats from Tehran did not entail the severing of relations between the two countries and that Britain was not willing to sever relations between the two countries.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Comments on EEC Move

LD2102125489 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 221 Feb 89

[Text] We begin the news reports of this bulletin with the remarks made by Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani during today's open session of the Islamic Majlis.

[Begin Hashemi-Rafsanjani recording] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The decision of the European Economic Community [EEC] to recall their envoys from Iran demonstrated that the issue of the perverse [zalleh] book and its subsequent events had been fully prepared and planned. We guessed something like this right from the start of the movement; and evidence confirms that Western imperialism has planned to combat Islam, particularly the true and pure Islam. For some time it [Western imperialism] thought that it would achieve its objective by accusing the Islamic Iran of being a warmonger and an aggressor. But it [the West] was deprived of this weapon and it backfired; and today, it have raised another cultural weapon. No doubt global blasphemy and world arrogance will be left with defeat, failure, and disgrace in this confrontation, too.

They imagine that by exerting such pressure they can prevent the decisive leader of the revolution and our selfless people from supporting Islam and from defending the lofty sanctity of Islam. This is their big mistake. A nation that is prepared to give its life for the sake of Islam and the Koran and that has demonstrated that it will sacrifice its dearest children for Islam and is not afraid of anything, such a nation will not give up such a great demand with such threats, which in reality are a way of salvation for our nation.

They make no mention of the devious and hypocritical ways that they have chosen to accuse the revolution leader [Khomeyni] and our revolution as the opponents of freedom. Those who showed no signs of regret on their faces in the wake of martyrdom of a group of people in Pakistan and Kashmir, how can they justify themselves to feel sorry for someone, that is, a single person who hurt the emotions of hundreds of millions of people by insulting one of the holiest figures of the creation? They think that with such hypocritical methods they can distance the cultural centers of the world from the Islamic Republic. This is another mistake.

Those who distance themselves from Islam and our revolution for such reasons have never been with the revolution to start with. Contrary to their desires, the sincere Muslims of the world, those who are truly Muslims and who have respect for the Koran, Islam, and the noble prophet, have just realized that the only center of Islam's defense, which defends Islam at any cost, is Iran and the leadership of the Islamic revolution of Iran. Those are the ones we seek. We never attached any hope to the support of the liberal, indecisive, cowardly, and conservative people [as heard] and those who please themselves with colorful Western titles. We demonstrated this from the first day of the revolution, too. Along the path that we have chosen, we are ready to sacrifice all we have. This issue has been proved many times.

Today, Muslims of the world rightfully feel that those who live in such places as Al-Azhar [Islamic university in Cairo] and all other places, which had so much claim to defending Islam, are still living in the world with their expenditure paid by Islam but do not feel any sympathy for Islam and are not prepared to undertake a serious struggle. The Islamic path will therefore separate from the path of division and hypocrisy in the wake of this; and the true Muslims, under the decisive leadership of this revolution, will make their ultimate decisions to struggle against global blasphemy, led by Western imperialism; and we welcome such a confrontation.

Although this secret is exposed, thanks to the devious and hypocritical deeds, slanders, and provoking emotions of the writers, publishers and others, we hope that the people of the world would understand who is (?telling the truth). Those who are ready, for the sake of a few dollars, to insult the most sacred (?centers) and sanctities of one billion Muslims and are ready to write obscenities and are ready to commit the crime of distorting facts and accuse the noble prophet of Islam of such characeristics, which are more suitable for the Western statesmen, these people will regret it later and will realize that they have become a tool in the hand of the arrogant powers of the world.

At any rate, we do not fear such threats and are prepared to follow our own path at any cost, particlarly so because this path will lead to the independence and self-sufficiency of the Islamic Republic. [end recording]

Tehran Radio Notes UK Muslim Lawyers' Action

NC2102091089 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] The British Muslim Legal Experts Association has drawn up a legal document indicting Salman Rushdie, author of the criminal book "The Satanic Verses," calling for his punishment. In this document, attention is drawn to the existence of a law prohibiting the dissemination of blasphemous material in Great Britain. The document demands the prosecution of the publisher and writer in this regard.

The document cites numerous cases in which the British Government prevented the publication of material that Christianity regards as blasphemous, and it is requested that the same attitude be applied to the publication of material that Islam regards as blasphemous.

EC Move Confronting 'Whole Islamic World'

LD2102145789 Tehran IRNA in English 1344 GMT 21 Feb 89

[By Khan Nawab Yusuf]

[Text] Athens, Feb. 21, IRNA—The 12-nation European Community decided Monday to recall its ambassadors from Tehran and freeze high-level talks with Iranian officials.

On the surface it is a measure directed against Iran for Imam Khomeyni's fatwa [edict] ordering Muslims to execute Salam Rushdie for his novel 'The Satanic Verses' which has outrageously offended the Muslims' most basic beliefs. In essence, however, the EC has taken a step against the whole Islamic world.

Rushdie's book did not insult Iran or Iranian leaders, but it ridiculed and blasphemed Islam and its prophet, peace be upon him, and many other holy figures of Islam dear to all Muslims.

The leader of the Islamic revolution did not express a personal opinion in issuing the death sentence on Rushdie, but all Islamic schools of thought levy the same penalty on a murtid, or apostate.

The fact that the imam's decision has not been challenged by any pro-West ruler in the Muslim world shows the immense support it enjoys among Muslim masses. Even the 'ulema in the state-controlled Al-Azhar University in Cairo expressed the view that Rushdie should be put to death.

In an interview with Saudi daily AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAR, 'Abd al-Jalil Shalbi, a famous Azharite and a former general secretary of the Islamic Research Academy, said if Rushdie did not repent he must be put to death.

The head of Al-Azhar University 'Abd al-Fattah, expressing similar opinion, said a Muslim who denies the known duties in Islam like prayer, fasting, etc. should be given a chance to repent, but should be put to death if he declined.

Iran and the Islamic world are in no need of taking lessons on human rights and civilization from Western nations whose hands are smeared with Muslim blood in the very near past.

A million Muslims were massacared by the French colonialists in Algeria during the uprising in the 60's and the killings and oppressions of British colonialists in Muslim lands requires no mentioning.

The EC states extend their support to Israel which every day kills and injures Palestinians fighting for their freedom. Why doesn't the "civilized" EC take action against Israel?

When 5,000 Muslim Kurds were gassed by the Iraqi regime last year, it was the same "cultured and civilized" EC that took no action. Britain in fact extended more loans to Baghdad.

Protest demonstrations against 'The Satanic Verses' were not restricted to Iran, but they were held all over the Muslim and non-Muslim world.

Six Pakistanis were killed a week ago when police opened fire on a crowd that stormed the U.S. Consulate in Islamabad to protest against the publication of the book in the U.S.

The EC decision against Iran reflects a community fear that the whole Islamic world could rally behind the leadership of Imam Khomeyni in his just demand to stop anyone from offending Islam in such inhuman, insensible and rude fashion.

If the West has no respect for religion, it in no way could expect the same attitude from Muslims for whom religion is a way of life.

Further, the champions of "freedom of thought and speech" should be aware that if one man has the right to insult and abuse the faith and beliefs of hundreds of millions, then they also have the freedom and right to defend their religion and faith.

Opposition Ayatollah Condemns Khomeyni Edict

AU2202091289 Rome ANSA in English 0827 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] (ANSA) Rome [no date as received]—An ayatollah belonging to the Iranian resistance has joined the world outcry over Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni's order to Muslims to kill the author of an allegedly blasphemous book.

At a press conference in Rome Tuesday, Ayatollah Jalal Gange'i [name as received], one of the key founders of a resistance group known as the Union for the Defense of Democracy and Independence in Iran, said that the world must face down Khomeyni in a determined manner and strongly condemn his incitement to murder.

Gange'i said the death sentence handed down against Salman Rushdie, the author of "The Satanic Verses," was not envisioned in the Islamic Constitution. There is nothing in Islamic precepts or laws which calls for the killing of a person only because he expressed his own ideas, he insisted.

Gange'i went on to underscore the inalienable right to freedom of expression and praised the European Economic Community's decision to recall its ambassadors from Tehran for consultations. He said that this was not enough, however, and that world nations should break off diplomatic ties with the present Iranian regime so as to leave it totally isolated.

For Gange'i the only plausible reason for Khomeyni's latest sortie was that he needed to create a crisis to divert attention away from his own internal problems which, Gange'i said, are insoluable.

Pakistani Group En Route To 'Execute' Rushdie

LD2102154789 Tehran IRNA in English 1430 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Islamabad, Feb. 21, IRNA—Mawlana Muhammad Hussain Naeemi, member of the Islamic Ideology Council and a religious leader of Pakistan has given full support to Imam Khomeyni in issuing a fatwa [edict] to execute the author of 'The Satanic Verses'.

Speaking to IRNA in Lahore he said the fatwa was based on Koranic laws.

"All scholars of different schools of thought have unanimously issued the decree to kill the apostate," he said.

Also Nawab Jahangir Shah Jogezai, a senator, took a serious notice of the reaction by Britain over the fatwa.

"Of course, every government has the responsibility to protect the lives of its people, but it is also the duty of the British Government to discourage such impression which has injured the feeling of millions of Muslims of the world," he said.

Meanwhile, according to THE NATION newspaper, a three member group from Hyderabad, Sind Province, would reach London on February 28 to execute Rushdie.

Pakistani Muslims Approve Verdict on Rushdie

LD1802132989 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Unidentified correspondent's report from Islamabad]

[Text] Following the decree of the imam of the ummah about the necessity of executing Salman Rushdie, yesterday Muslims of Karachi, Lahore, Quetta, Peshawar, and Rawalpindi staged a mass strike and took part in huge demonstrations and marches. They praised the imam of the ummah's recent edict and rejected any compromise and surrender to the recent acts of world arrogance against Islam. The Muslims of Karachi yesterday took part in unprecedented demonstrations while condemning the United States and Britain for defending those who have insulted Islam, and called on the Pakistani Government to close down the U.S. cultural centre in Islamabad and to expel that country's ambassador from Pakistan.

This morning, too, a number of the 'ulema and political and religious personalities of Pakistan visited our ambassador's residence and talked about the steps that need to be taken in order to prevent the conspiracies of world arrogance delivering blows at Islam and Islam's noble prophet. At this meeting the 'ulema of Pakistan handed to our ambassador an official letter addresed to his holiness the imam.

Part of this letter said: On behalf of the various strata of the Muslim Pakistani ummah, especially the 'ulema and Islamic scholars, we express our gratitude for your excellency's wise stance. Without doubt this clear and revolutionary stance, which is based on the strong and pure teachings of the Koran, has played an effective role in strengthening the determination of other Muslims of the world in fighting against the enemies of Islam.

The message went on: Your holiness's brave edict has created a great upsurge among the Muslim Pakistani nation, which had already reacted in various ways against this shameful act; and the will and determination of the Muslim Pakistani ummah in confronting these conspiracies have been further strengthened.

USSR Presidium Sends Message to Khamene'i

LD2102202389 Tehran IRNA in English 1915 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA—Soviet Ambassador Vladimir Gudev presented a message from Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union for President 'Ali Khamene'i to a senior Foreign Ministry official.

No report was revealed on the contents of the message to the president.

Gudev also held talks with Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-America Affairs Mohammad Javad Larijani on Tehran-Moscow relations and issues of mutual interests.

Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Shevardnadze is to visit Tehran on February 25, and is to address a press conference two days later.

Khamene'i Receives Najibullah Message on Peace

LD1802095289 Tehran IRNA in English 0920 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Mashhad, Khorasan Prov., Feb. 18, IRNA—Head of the Kabul regime Najibullah in two separate messages to President 'Ali Khamene'i of Iran and Kenan Evren of Turkey, on Friday urged them to help establish peace and security in Afghanistan.

According to BAKHTAR news agency monitored here Najibullah in his message to President Khamene'i has appealed to Iran to use its influence in bringing peace and calm to Afghanistan.

In a deceiving move Najibullah attended the Friday prayers in Kabul's Shir-Parvar Mosque. The Afghan news agency reporting this said that Najibullah attended the prayers in order to fulfill his Islamic duties and pray for peace and national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile following the pull out of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan, the Kabul regime has hurriedly launched a propaganda campaign including release of statements and holding of press conferences in a bid to portray itself as peace loving, Islamic, nationalist and legitimate.

The propaganda campaign is so immature that a foreign reporter surprised with Islamic gestures of the Kabul regime asked a Kabul official how the ruling party which is communist justified its Islamic moves. The official refuted as mere propaganda that the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan is communist. He stated that the policy of the party is completely nationalistic and Islamic.

For the past 10 years the Kabul regime has been insisting on its communist and Marxist policies and books and media are full of communist literature preaching communism and materialism. The Afghan media had for the past few days publicising Najibullah's participation in the Friday prayers and the Kabul foreign minister had announced it.

News agencies reported Najibullah attending the prayers on Friday and said that he was under tight security precautions and was protected by armoured vehicles. The communist government in Kabul has promoted a laical world view since its coming to power ten years ago, by various means including the publication of treatises in its print media, among them one in the ISLAMIC UNITY paper in support for atheistic doctrines.

Further Reportage on Khamene'i Visit to SFRY

For additional reportage on President Khamene'i's visit to Yugoslavia, see the Yugoslavia section of the 21 February East Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Foreigners Commemorate Anti-Rushdie 'Martyrs'

LD1802113689 Tehran IRNA in English 1121 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Qom, Feb 18, IRNA—Commemorative ceremonies were held by foreign theological students and Muslims residing here in memory of Pakistanis martyred in demonstrations last Sunday against "The Satanic Verses".

At least six demonstrators were martyred and over a hundred were wounded during demonstrations against Salman Rushdie's blasphemous book.

Leader of Pakistan's Shia Muslims Alama Sajid Ali Naqavi said the book was aimed at evaluating Muslim reaction. However the Muslim uprisings specifically in Iran, Pakistan and India proved that such provocations had no effect on the resolute will of Muslim nations.

Head of Jama al-Manzur Theological Center of Lahore Alama Safdar Husseini-Najafi called on world Muslims to implement the Imam's fatwa [religious edict] against Rushdie as soon as possible.

Muslims from Paksitan, India, Afghanistan, Arab states of the Persian Gulf and other Islamic countries residing here were present in the ceremony.

Musavi Arrives in Tabriz From Ankara

LD1802094989 Tehran IRNA in English 1445 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Tabriz, Feb. 17 IRNA—Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi Friday afternoon arrived here from Ankara where he concluded a three-day official visit to Turkey resulting in an economic and trade protocol.

Musavi plans to inaugurate a number of industrial units and take part in ceremonies marking the bloody uprising of 29th Bahman (Feb. 18).

On February 18, 1978, Tabrizis staged a rally in support for a bloody uprising held in Qom forty days earlier—in which many demonstrators supporting Imam Khomeyni were martyred by the security forces. Meanwhile, Heavy Industries Minister Behzad Navabi and Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh as well as other members of the Iranian delegation to Ankara returned to Tehran.

Comments on Loans, Rushdie

LD1802095189 Tehran IRNA in English 0832 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] Tabriz, Feb. 18, IRNA—Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi on a stop-over here from a visit to Ankara Friday opposed reliance on foreign loans for financing Iran's post-war reconstruction. He said Iran's independence is guaranteed by relying on its own national wealth and domestic resources.

"To rely on foreign loans," he said, "would be to look for quick results at the cost of country's independence."

Musavi reminded that even in the wartime period and despite the bottlenecks investments for development projects were never sacrificed for war expenditures.

"Our efficient manpower considers reconstruction effort as another aspect of post-revolution struggle for survival ensuring prosperity for the country," he concluded.

The proposition was also sharply criticized by the future leader of the revolution Ayatollah Hoseyn-'Ali Montazeri Thursday who warned that the immediate aftermath of the decision would be political and cultural dependence on those countries.

Musavi on a return trip from Ankara arrived here Friday where he met with local officials and supervised the launching of a few industrial projects.

Asked to comment on foreign threats of reprisals in response to Iran's anger at the publication in London of Salman Rushdie's 'Satanic Verses' he said such browbeating by 'world arrogance' is far too ineffectual to make Iranian Muslims modify their revolutionary stand in relation with inviolable ideological principles.

Reveals Amnesty Plan

LD1802003689 Tehran IRNA in English 1640 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Tabriz, Feb. 17, IRNA—The government's plan to grant "general amnesty" for Iranians abroad would soon be proposed to the leader of the Islamic republic, Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi said Friday.

The plan, first revealed to Iranians in Turkey during Musavi's state visit, would be presented to Imam Khomeyni for endorsement.

Last week Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri reiterated that firm steps should be taken to attract nearly four million Iranians living abroad "who long to come to Iran but are scared."

In Ankara Thursday Premier Musavi said once the plan was approved "the government will provide special facilities for Iranians abroad to return home."

In the meantime he called on the Iranians to preserve their links with their homeland.

On his Turkish visit, the prime minister denied rumors concerning talks with U.S. officials and said no discussion was even held with the Turkish officials in this regard.

Before leaving Ankara prime ministers of Iran and Turkey earlier today expressed hope that Tehran-Ankara relations would expand and the two-billion-dollar protocol signed by the two neighbors would be implemented.

Speaking to reporters at Ankara Airport Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal referred to the complete neutrality of his country in the Iraq-Iran war and said turkey was ready to play and active role for establishment of a lasting peace in the region.

The two countries held fruitful talks on mutual cooperation in technical and industrial fields including the Iran-Turkey gas trunkline project for the transfer of Iranian natural gas to Europe via Turkey.

"I feel that the two countries have taken more important steps for expansion of fundamental cooperation comparing the last eight years," Musavi said.

Larijani Interviewed on Relations With West

LD2102200889 Tehran IRNA in English 1930 GMT 21 Feb 89

[By Mohammad Javid]

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA—Iran would stand by its position that Salman Rushdie the British author of 'The Satanic Verses' should be punished according to the law of Islam, no matter what the consequences may be, a senior Iranian official stressed Tuesday.

"We will have to pay a price, but it's worth it," said Deputy Foreign Minister Modammad Javad Larijani.

"The West should not have any doubts. We are very determined in defending the reputation of Islam and the prophet," he said in an interview.

As Dr Larijani spoke ambassadors and senior diplomats of the 12-nation European Community, as well as those of their allies, were packing their bags to leave Tehran for their respective capitals in protest against the execution order issued on Rushdie.

"They are missing the point," the official said of the EC's decision Monday. "What they have done is amateurish, hasty and very counter-productive."

"First of all they have not understood how fundamental this issue is. Islam has been subjected to the most obscene insults. Secondly, our resolve, our people's and our government's resolve as well as that of the world of Islam has been underestimated."

"They have not grasped the fact that our Islamic beliefs are most sacred to us—beyond anything else."

Dr Larijani was answering questions from IRNA and the TEHRAN TIMES at the Foreign Ministry. The interview took place an hour late because of an unscheduled meeting called by the prime minister to discuss the affair.

He appeared as cheerful and positive as ever with no sign that the diplomatic crisis had overtaken him.

"It really is a crisis," he said. "The most basic beliefs of a billion Muslims of the world has come under blatant attack. This is totally unacceptable."

How long will it last?

"This depends on them (the West). They must come to their senses. The West should not degrade itself and it should stop this confrontation."

"We haven't sent commandos (to kill Rushdie). They want Muslims to accept humiliation."

How can tensions be eased?

"Everyone wants to reduce the crisis. But they (Western Governments) are responsible. Our policy is not based on confrontation. They must have some nerve to think that we owe them something."

Will Iran use the diplomatic lessons learned during the war?

"We will use all the facilities at our disposal to defend our sanctities. We have not closed the door on negotiations nor have we opened the door for confrontation. They must have some nerve to think that we owe them something."

What practical steps would be taken?

"The best thing is for the Western world and Western Europe in particular to realize what it is happening. Insulting Islam is unacceptable. There is no other way.

If economic sanctions are imposed on Iran?

"Everything we do is for the defence of Islam. We will pay any price - this should be very clear. We have many capabilities and such pressures will not force us to raise our hands (and surrender).

"There have been such actions in the past and this time it will not be successful either. We will cope with the conditions."

Will Iran demand a meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference?

"It is the responsibility of the Islamic government to defend Islam. It is very regretable that they have not yet done so. It is very degrading to see that European foreign ministers meet to attack Islam but Islamic foreign ministers have not met to defend Islam.

"We have called for a meeting and we will follow it up."

Besharati on Foreign Policy, Other Issues

NC1702182189 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 12 Feb 89 p 2

[From the RESALAT correspondent, Qom]

[Text] The fourth round of peace talks is to begin shortly, and meanwhile the Iraqi forces will withdraw to international borders. This was stated by Mr Besharati, deputy foreign minister at the 22 Bahman [11 February] Yawm-Allah celebrations held by the Qom Islamic guilds' association at the Chaharmardan mosque in that city.

He said: Preliminaries have been completed for our compatriots to participate in the Hajj, and plans for contacting [Saudi] Arabia are being formulated, and as a result we shall perform the Hajj next year.

Besharati termed Dr Velayati's meeting in London a coincidence. On the subject of talks with the British as being incompatible with the revolution's objectives, Besharati said: The slogan of neither East nor West does not mean that we should not have contacts with anyone. It means that we should preserve our independence and not succumb to the domination of the two blocs.

Regarding reasons for the acceptance of Resolution 598, he stressed that we have not been defeated in any aspect of the war with Iraq.

He deemed the country's foreign policy program dynamic and successful, and stated: Our extensive presence in all the international communities enabled us to convey the voice of the revolution to the world amid all the widespread international propaganda against us.

Speaking on the gains of the revolution, the deputy foreig minister mentioned the fact that Afghanistan was on the threshold of victory, which he considered one of the effects of the revolution. He attributed, high prices, disarray and discontent in offices as factors behind dissatisfaction and counterrevolution, and alerted the people to the need for support of the revolution. He added: Beware of the situation when we falter from supporting the revolution even for a moment because it is a question of the government of Islam. The revolution belongs to all the people, therefore there must be no controversy on the subject of officials and the government. If the revolution is defeated, all of us will be harmed.

ETTELA'AT Comments on Foreign Loans

NC1702173989 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 6 Feb 89 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "On the Margin of Foreign Loans"]

[Excerpts] News agencies, foreign publications, and others have broached the subject of foreign loans and incurring debts from abroad in every interview with high level officials. In addition to seeking differences in official opinions, they also strive to keep the issue of foreign loans alive. Many of the esteemed officials have added to the differences on the subject by airing their opinion, and without being aware of the dimensions of the subject, and without realizing that according to Clause 80 of the Constitution, the giving and taking of loans can only be undertaken by the government with prior approval of the Majlis. [passage omitted]

Fortunately, our president has remarked recently: "No one believes in foreign borrowing in our country." As regards domestic loans, as well, the deputies should initiate effective and sensitive national loan plans.

Mohtashemi Comments on Afghan Refugees, Drugs

LD1602212889 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1130 GMT 16 Feb 89

[From the "In Line With People, in Step With Officials" program with Interior Minister Mohtashemi and others, moderated by unidentified correspondent; date, place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Unidentified correspondent] [Passage omitted] Mr Mohtashemi, one of our dear listeners asks: We witnessed the end of the miltary occupation of Afghanistan. Will the Afghans who migrated to Iran be returned after this issue or not?.

[Mohtashemi] I should inform this dear listener and the public in general who might have such a question in mind, that the Islamic revolution and the Islamic Republic of Iran are based upon the subline goals of Islam; in our Constitution, it is also been stated that Iran will be administered on the basis of Islamic principles; and that: my ummah is one community, is the basis of the policies of the Islamic Republic. [passage omitted] Today, although the occupation is over, the life of a mercenary and dependent government has not come to an end yet. That government is still in power and its hostility still continues. It is natural that if a popular and Islamic government is formed in Afghanistan, all Afghan refugees and emigrants will return to their own country from Iran and Pakistan in order to reconstruct and run their country. We will help them in this connection and will provide them with necessary facilities for their return to their country, and we will in no way prevent them from returning. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Mr Mohtashemi, how do you evaluate the interest of Turkish officials in the fight against narcotics.

[Mohtashemi] Because the issue of narcotics is regarded as something very ugly in world public opinion and any country that fights against narcotics can claim that it has taken a step in the eyes of various nations and international organizations, the Turkish Government also welcomed this plan and was especially hoping that it should be known that Turkey is also active in its campaign against narcotics. We witnessed this interest in our discussions. In the same connection, we should also have the same cooperation with our neighboring countries in the east of our country.

We hope that the fate of Afghanistan will be in the hands of the Afghans themselves, that the hands of the aliens will be cut off, and that an Islamic and popular government may come into power there. Through cooperation with that popular government which we wish into power in the near futrue and with the Government of Pakistan, we can have a high degree of guarantee in our borders. Pakistan has expressed its strong interest to collaborate with Iran in connection with narcotics. [passage omitted] God willing, with the collaboration which we shall have with Pakistan, we shall initiate a joint move to close our eastern borders; as a result, the eastern and western borders of Iran will be made secure. Regarding international dimensions, we are also prepared to collaborate with any country that is prepared to express willingness to collaborate with us in this human struggle. One example of this is the Soviet Union. The Soviet ambassador met with me and he expressed his strong desire to cooperate with us in view of the experiences which Iran has in connection with narcotics, and that we should exchange our experiences. I also agreed, and recently through the Foreign Ministry, Soviet officials have expressed their willingness to have some delegations visit Tehran and Moscow from both countries. We also agreed to this, and God willing we shall have this international cooperation. [passage omitted]

Majlis Deputies Write Letter on Drug Campaign

LD1902181988 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Excerpts] During today's open session of the Majlis a bill on the provision of facilities for admission of volunteer combatants and mobilization forces of the construction jihad to universities and higher education institutes received its second reading and was approved. [passage omitted]

Also during today's open session of the Islamic Majlis a letter written by 200 Majlis deputies to the imam of the ummah on the fight against narcotics was read. This letter refers to his holiness the imam's warning on the destructive consequences of narcotics, which ruins future generations, saying: Sympathetic people are increasingly optimistic about the future of the antinarcotics movement, owing to the Discernment of What Is Best Assembly's approval of the bill, the establishment of the antinarcotics headquarters chaired by his excellency the prime minister, the remarkable efforts by the responsible organs, particularly the Islamic Revolution Committee's measures on border control and prevention of the arrival of the drugs smuggling convoys, the destruction of several international gangs, the extension of the intelligence, and practical methods. In this letter the Majlis deputies express gratitude to the officials involved in this plan and ask for the continuation and consolidation of the antinarcotics squad until this bane is eradicated from the country.

Drug Raids Break Up 3 Rings; 90 People Arrested

LD1902095889 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0730 GMT 18 Feb 89

[Text] The guards of the Yazd Islamic Revolution Committee succeeded in smashing three narcotics distribution gangs during past month. In this connection, 25.8 kg of opium; 30 mesqal of opium juice; 5 gms of heroin; 80

liters of alcoholic drinks; 15 tools used for drugs, and a number of weapons were discovered, and 90 persons were arrested and delivered to the provincial judicial authorities.

7 Drug Gangs 'Destroyed'; 250 Arrested
LD1902105389 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] In continuation of the narcotics project [adiyat], seven gangs engaged in manufacturing and distributing narcotics were destroyed and more than 130 kg of assorted narcotics were discovered in southern and eastern provinces.

The Islamic Revolution Committee announced: Committee guards in Baluchestan Va Sistan, Esfahan, Nowshahr, Fars, Khorasan, and Hormuzgan Provinces discovered 130 kg of opium, 83 kg of heroin, money, and a number of vehicles, and arrested 250 persons in this connection.

Border Issues Discussed With Pakistani Governors
LD1902170189 Tehran IRNA in English 1637 GMT 19 Feb 89

[Text] Sarawan, Sistan-Baluchestan Prov., Feb. 19, IRNA—Governors 'Ali Maleki and 'Umran Afzal of the Iranian and Pakistani border cities of Sarawan and Kharan Kalat respectively, discussed border issues here Saturday [18 February].

"Global arrogance is trying to erode Muslims' power through the spread of narcotics," said Maleki and expected sincere cooperation from both Muslim neighbours "to eradicate the deadly drug plot."

Afzal in reply expressed readiness for cooperation on various border issues and called for regular monthly meetings between the border officials of the two countries.

The two sides also reached understanding on extradition of bandits and smugglers.

Mohtashemi, Sadr Reaffirm People's 'Rule'
NC1502171789 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 21 Jan 89 pp 15, 2

[Excerpts] The 4-day seminar of the political deputies of the country's governorates opened this morning with remarks by Interior Minister Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali-Akbar Mohtashemi.

Our correspondent reports that Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohtashemi initially referred to the observance of the revolution's laws and regulations, and said: Violating the Islamic Republic's laws is an unforgiveable offense. [passage omitted]

He also said: The biggest danger threatening the United States and Israel is the Hizballah and the Islamic resistance in Lebanon—the outcome of the Islamic movement in the world. The Islamic Republic has to support the children of the revolution abroad. [passage omitted]

Referring to the need to implement the law on Islamic councils, Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohtashemi said: We have to implement the law on Islamic councils. The people are the main issue, and if there are no people, then we are nothing. It is the people that should rule the country. If the rule is an individual rule, then what difference is there with the past? The day that we lose the people will be the day of the revolution's death.

Therefore, our dear brothers in the provinces should prepare the grounds for the implementation of the law on councils so that the people can choose their representatives.

The interior minister then referred to the law on parties and said: Parties and organizations have freedom to operate within the framework of the Constitution. Those who want to serve this country can come and state their thoughts. We should grant the people and those whose hearts beat for the revolution the right to operate, and this can be achieved by the law on parties. [passage omitted]

Dr Seyyed Mohammad Sadr, deputy interior minister for political affairs, was the first speaker of the seminar. Referring to the Constitution as one of the big miracles of the revolution, he said: The best point in the Constitution is the attention that is paid to the issue of independence, and to the fact that the government system should be such that no harm will come to the country's independence. The Constitution has closed all those roads that can harm independence—roads which lead to the formation of a government with a dictatorial thought or making one person the head of the country as a dictator—something which will lead to the omission of the people from the scene. On this basis, the Constitution has granted the people great power. Naturally, the greater the people's presence on the scene, the less the danger of dictatorship threatens the country. Articles 26 and 27 of the Constitution stipulate the freedom of parties, and one of the articles discusses the issue of councils.

Mr Sadr continued: The laws on parties and councils are among our most important laws, and God willing, the council elections will begin in 1368 [year beginning 21 March 1989]. This is a source of pride for us. The Interior Ministry is in charge of implementing the bills approved by the Majlis.

He added: The implementation of the law on councils and parties will complement the revolution in its political dimension. In other words, the implementation of the law on parties will bring political freedom to the country, and the implementation of the law on councils will bring about the rule of the people. If we fully implement these two laws, then there will be no shortcomings in the revolution in the domestic political dimension.

Another point is that the Islamic revolution is a model for other countries, and we should encourage the export of the Islamic republic's system. We should tell the Muslims of the world what our country has done for its people. With the implementation of these two laws, they will be able to understand that true freedom exists in this country, and that the people share in the rule.

The other point is that the existence of councils means the negation of dictatorship, and the more the people's councils are strengthened, the more the grounds that favor dictatorship will be eliminated. A more important issue is that the Islamic councils help the government. Someone who opposes the people's intervention in affairs and thinks that this intervention creates problems is actually creating dictatorship without knowing it.

The deputy interior minister then referred to the duties of the councils, and added: Despite the fact that the formation of councils is a political issue, nevertheless the duties of the councils are not political in nature but concern the fields of development, social and cultural affairs and services; and they do not have the right to intervene either in political affairs or in security matters.

The next point is the people's involvement in all levels of government, and the people have a role in determining the leadership, the president, and Majlis deputies. It is only in the lower dimensions that the people do not have the role they should have. This problem will be solved with the implementation of the law on councils. Another problem is the problem of cadre-construction for the government. The councils will enable forces that exist even in the most remote villages to be identified and put to use.

The last issue concerning councils is the dispossession of all opposing and enemy groups of slogans. With the implementation of the law on parties and councils, opponent groups will dispossess their slogans. Dr Sadr then referred to the issue of parties and political freedom, and said: Freedom is one of our major slogans, and if we analyze the Iranian revolution, we can see that despotic and dictatorial elements were more effective in bringing the Islamic revolution about than were other elements.

He added: Freedom is among the significant issues which all the people paid attention to in the revolution. We should see how freedom is under Islam, and that a Muslim is a free human being who has freedom in his actions and who can choose.

He then compared the past law on parties to the current one, and said: We cannot say that the law on parties which existed in the past is similar to the one we want to implement. These two cannot be compared. If we legalize political activities and grant freedom on the basis of the law, then this will result in many benefits. If we do not, we will have created chaos in society. The implementation of the law on parties will save us from political chaos, dictatorship, and from the downfall of the revolution. In general, the freedom of parties will lead to the expression of various thoughts and a confrontation of views in a healthy atmosphere. Our experience is that a confrontation of views has always had positive results. On the other hand, the law on parties will also control the government. When there are various parties, then if a government presents a program with shortcomings, the parties can overcome these weak points.

'Counterrevolutionary' Prisoners Given Amnesty

LD2002182189 Tehran IRNA in English 1744 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 20, IRNA—The second group of former members of counter-revolutionary grouplets were freed from prison in Khorramabad and Bushehr Monday [20 February], on the occasion of Imam 'Ali's (A.S.) [peace be upon him] birthday.

Twenty five prisoners returned to their families in Khorramabad where 60 had been released earlier following Imam Khomeyni's general amnesty on February 8.

In Bushehr, an unspecified number of prisoners were freed amid the loud cries of Allah-u Akbar [God is great] from their jubilant relatives.

Last Sunday Information Minister Mohammad Mohammadi Reyshahri said 1,500 former members of anti-revolutionary grouplets had been freed between February 9-14.

A total of 2,600 are to be released while another 900 not qualified under the amnesty will remain in prison.

83 Iraqi POW's Released 21 Feb

LD2102082889 Tehran IRNA in English 0747 GMT 21 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 21, IRNA—A group of 83 out of 260 Iraqi POWS on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the culmination of the Islamic revolution were flown home Tuesday [21 February] morning. The rest will depart Tehran in two days.

The new batch of Iraqi disabled and sick POWS released today were all militarymen and went under final medical tests by the Red Cross representatives before they left Tehran Mehrabad Airport.

Three of the released POWS asked Iranian authorities for political asylum which was granted.

A total of 16 Iraqi POWS out of the 260 have sought political asylum.

Iran has previously released 800 Iraqi POWS unilaterally.

Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati recently said that Iran is ready for the exchange of all POWS with Iraq within the framework of the U.N. Resolution 598.

Second Group Departs

LD2202090989 Tehran IRNA in English 0850 GMT 22 Feb 89

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 22, IRNA—A second batch of 81 disabled Iraqi POWS were unilaterally released by Iran today. Six of them asked for political asylum when their names were read by the Red Cross officials at Tehran's Mehrabad [Airport].

Iran announced this month it would unilaterally release 260 disabled Iraqi POWs on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the culmination of 1979 Islamic Revolution. After the names of the freed POWS were released, 16 of them asked for asylum which was granted.

The first group of 80 POWS were flown home Tuesday after going under final medical tests by Red Cross representatives.

The group initially inclded 83 POWS, three of whom sought political asylum.

So far, 25 of the total 260 captives, have sought asylum.

Another group of 80 POWS are to be released Thursday.

Mehran Governorate Resumes Work After War

LD1602145189 Tehran IRNA in English 0956 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Text] Ilam, Western Iran, Feb. 16, IRNA—The municipality and governorate of Mehran, a war-devastated border town southwest of here, resumed work after 8 years of Iraqi imposed war.

The resumption of activities at Mehran municipality and governorate is aimed at revitalization of palm plants, flattening of lands where water pipelines are laid and to draw plans to reconstruct the town.

Mehran, during the 8-year-old Iraq-Iran war, was occasionally at Iraqi hands [as received]. Once in 1986, Iraq captured it to compensate for its bitter defeat in Al-Faw and proposed its exchange for the port city which Iran refused. Iranian forces later in the same year recaptured the town of Mehran in Karbala'-1 operations.

Last time, it was occupied by the members of the counter- revolutionary forces of the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organisation (MKO) when they launched a military invasion of Iran in the western front backed by the Iraqi Army. The attack was launched in July last year, only a few days after Tehran accepted the U.N. Resolution 598.

Opposition Group Members Hold News Conference

LD1702004189 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 16 Feb 89

[Text] Some of the former high-ranking members of the small groups yesterday attended a news conference. Domestic and foreign reporters and some press attaches of foreign embassies in Iran also attended the conference at the Laleh Hotel in Tehran. After expressing their thanks to the Islamic Revolution's great leader, the members described the general amnesty of prisoners who had belonged to small groups as a sign of the strength and stability of the Islamic Republic's system and described the weakness and desperation of the small groups and the fact that they are facing a dead end.

These individuals, who were sentenced to long jail sentences and even execution and who were released from prison following the imam of the ummah's general amnesty decree, expressed their gratitude to the imam of the ummah, and requested to renew their allegiance to him. Those taking part in this news conference referred to the separation of the small groups from the people and described the reason for this separation to be the small groups' un-Islamic and eclectic ideology.

They announced: In addition to religious deviation, we also adopted incorrect methods and policies in our activities which also reinforced our separation from the revolutionary masses, so much so that we found ourselves gradually in the camp of the enemies of the revolution and in line with imperialism, and, in the final analysis, we found ourselves in the opposite camp of the revolutionary people. These persons added: Now that we have been released, we have no feeling of political betrayal and we will be present upon the stage shoulder-to-shoulder with the revolutionary people for the sake of the safeguarding of the country's independence. We call on all the people who are interested in the country, regardless of their beliefs and ideologies, to participate in the struggle of the revolutionary people of Iran for the sake of national honor and glory.

One of the participants referred to the claims of the small counterrevolutionary groups about the execution of thousands of prisoners; he said: it is easy to tell lies, but the difference between truth and falsehood in their claims is the difference between their false claim of 14,000 prisoners and the true figure of 3,500 prisoners from the small groups.

At the end of the news conference, the participants asked the officials to provide them with the opportunity to hold a meeting to express their allegiance to the imam in order to join to the ranks of the Muslim, revolutionary, and heroic Iranian nation.

In this news conference, Sa'id Shahsavandi, a former member of the Central [Committee] of the monafeqin [hypocrites, term used to describe the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] small groups, talked in detail about the internal ideological dead-end faced by the small counterrevolutionary groups. It should be noted that Shahsavandi has not been released yet.

Those taking part in that new conference were: 'Ali Asghar Ekbatani, a former member of the political bureau of Ranjbaran [Toilers] Party; Nader Azarafruz, a former member of Monafeqin; Pedram Rahbari, a member of the Union of Communists; Hoseyn Shoja'i, a former member of the Tudeh Party; Nader Kiamarzi, Mohammad Baqer-Kholdi, and Sa'id Shahsavandi, Shohreh Hamidi, and Zhamak Salehi, all former members of the small Monafeqin group.

Sri Lanka

New Cabinet of 22 Ministers Sworn in 18 Feb

BK1802075189 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0729 GMT 18 Feb 89

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Feb 18 (LANKAPUVATH)—The new cabinet, consisting of 22 ministers was sworn in today.

They are: minister of Buddha Sasana, President R. Premadasa, minister of policy planning and implementation, President R. Premadasa, minister of defence, President R. Premadasa, minister of transport and highways, Wijapala Mendis, minister of higher education science and technology, A C S Hameed, minister of finance, D B Wijetunge, minister of plantation industries, Gamini Dissanayake, minister of justice and parliamentary affairs, M Vincent Perera, minister of agriculture food and co-operatives, Lalthi Athulathmudali, minister of power and energy, Festus Perera, minister of textiles and rural industrial development, S. Thondaman, minister of industries, Ranil Wickramasinghe, minister of labour and social welfare, Dr. Ranjith Atapattu, minister of lands, irrigation and Mahaweli development, P Dayaratne, minister of fisheries and aquatic resources, Joseph Michael Perera, minister of education, cultural affairs and information, W J M Lokubandara, minister of posts and telecommunications, Alick Aluvihare, minister of youth affairs and sports, Nanda Mathew, minister of trade and shipping, A R Mansoor, minister of public administration, provincial councils home affairs, U B Wijekoon, minister of health and women's affairs, Mrs. Renuka Herth, minister of tourism, A M S Adikari, minister of housing and construction, B Sirisena Cooray, minister of foreign affairs, Ranjan Wijeratne.

Observer Group Says Elections 'Free and Fair'

BK1702122889 Hong Kong AFP in English 1223 GMT 17 Feb 89

[Text] Colombo, Feb 17 (AFP)—A 10-nation poll observer group said Friday that Sri Lanka's parliamentary elections were plagued by violence, but reported that the conduct of the vote had been "free and fair in many places."

In an interim report released here, the 18-member independent committee said it noted instances of considerable violence and physical obstruction which affected voting due to the climate of fear.

The group was unanimous in welcoming the way Sri Lankans had maintained their commitment to democracy despite "widespread efforts by subversive organisations, and others with possible political affiliations" to disrupt balloting.

"The fact that the turnout was as high as it was, was in part, a testimony to the security arrangements which attempted to give adequate protection in difficult circumstances," the report said.

Both Sinhalese and Tamil rebels had vowed to sabotage the poll, the first general election in 11 years. At least 69 people were killed in violence on the day of balloting Wednesday and the night before.

"The violence and intimidation adversely influenced the voter turnout and subverted the election in a number of areas. Having set out these qualifications, it is the opinion of the observers that, by and large, the election was still free and fair in most areas," the report said.

It said the group visited over 200 polling stations in 20 of the island's 22 electoral districts during balloting wednesday and the day before.

The group also commended Elections Commissioner Chandrananda de Silva and his staff for the "pre-election preparations, as well as their efficiency" on polling day .

"The efficient way the plans were put into effect were matched only by the dedication and courage of the election officer, some of whom were threatened and some of whom were indeed sadly killed," the report said.

President Ranasinghe Premadasa's United National Party won the election bagging 125 out of the 225 seats in the national Parliament for a further six-year term.

Delhi: 20 JVP Members Killed by New Group

BK2002030289 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] In Sri Lanka, at least 20 persons have been killed in fresh violence by hitherto unknown organization called the Black Cats. Officials said in Colombo yesterday that the bodies with gunshot injuries were discovered in villages in Anuradhapura District. The victims were members of the ultra-nationalist group the People's Liberation Front [JVP]. In a separate incident the JVP killed four men at three places in southern Matara District. Security forces said these killings by extremists took place after last week's parliamentary elections.

Police on Alert; Militants Call Strike

BK2002153889 Hong Kong AFP in English 1523 GMT 20 Feb 89

[Text] Colombo, Feb 20 (AFP)—Sri Lankan Police went on an island-wide alert Monday after anti-government militants called for a general strike Tuesday and declared a "curfew" in at least one major town, police sources here said.

"It is a country-wide alert," a police officer said. "We have also requested other (security) forces to go on the alert and exercise maximum care and precaution tomorrow."

Police said the alert was sounded after posters reportedly issued by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP, or People's Liberation Front) were put up in several places appealing for the protest strike.

The posters, some of them hand-written, dubbed Wednesday's parliamentary election won by the ruling United National Party (UNP) as a "fraud" and urged people to continue anti-government campaigns.

It was the first major signal that the JVP, a violently anti-government Sinhalese rebel group, had rejected President Ranasinghe Premadasa's appeal last week to renounce violence and join the democratic mainstream.

The posters appealed to people to keep away from work, traders not to open their shops and motorists not to drive their vehicles on Tuesday.

The sources said the JVP had also declared a 24-hour "curfew"—strikes and curfews are favourite JVP tactics—at central Kandy beginning early Tuesday and asked the town's mostly Sinhalese residents not to switch on lights in their homes after evening.

As a warning to possible violators, the JVP torched and destroyed Sunday night one of the country's leading supermarkets near Kandy, one week after its owners failed to shut during a JVP strike held in the runup to the election. Police sources said goods worth more than 60,000 U.S. dollars were lost in the arson, carried out by an unspecified number of JVP activists, most of whom are known to be educated unemployed youths.

The JVP had called for a boycott of Wednesday's election and killed 12 candidates and hundreds of political workers during campaigning. Some 70 people died on the day of election and the night before and most murders were blamed on the JVP.

Mr. Premadasa, who became president in December, previously had a reputation as being "soft" towards the JVP. But on Thursday, a day after the UNP captured Parliament, he warned that "our people will not tolerate any more destructive inhuman actions."

At the same time, in an apparent reference to the JVP and Tamil militants, he urged "those outside the democratic mainstream" to realise that their paths of violence had been rejected by Sri Lankan voters.

The JVP shot dead four civilians over the weekend for taking part in the elections.

The group, which in 1971 led an insurrection that left more than 10,000 dead, stepped up its anti-government campaign after Sri Lanka signed a peace accord with India in July 1987 to end a Tamil separatist campaign.

India has 45,000-50,000 troops under the accord in the island's north and east, which are mainly Tamil areas.

Jayewardene Leaves for Japan as Special Envoy

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[Excerpt] Former President J.R. Jayewardene left for Japan today as special envoy of President R. Premadasa and as representative of Sri Lanka to attend the funeral of late Emperor Hirohito of Japan. He will arrive in Japan on the 23d and will attend the funeral ceremony on the 24th. [passage omitted]